阿川宗則

天海玲菜

女性上位の環境でもまれる、化粧品会社2年目社員。現在恋人ナシ。

「キスしてくれなきゃ小さくなっちゃう」と阿川を訪ねる少女。

Cupid II
Volume.2
"Cherry Syndrome"

●COVER ILLUSTRATION 北崎 拓
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さくらんぼシンドローム

「クピドの悪戯II」

Cherry Syndrome

2

Taku Kitazaki Presents

北崎 拓

Young Sunday Comics

YS COMICS

さくらんぼシンドローム

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2

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Volume.2
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北崎 拓

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Cupid II
Volume.2
"Cherry Syndrome"

この時代、恋の神様クピド(Cupid)が悪戯心で選んだ男女に起こる恋の物語。
オムニバス第2弾「さくらんぼシンドローム」――
化粧品会社営業の23歳・阿川宗則の部屋を、見知らぬ少女・天海玲菜が訪ねてくる。
「キスしてくれなきゃ小さくなっちゃう」という彼女に
半信半疑で付き合う阿川は、いつしか本気で心の内をさらけ出し始め……
週刊ヤングサンデーで絶大な支持を得る、今、一番目が離せない恋物語!
――で、キスしちゃうの?

今、一番おもしろい
YOUNG SUNDAY COMICS

さくらんぼシンドローム-クピドの悪戯II- 1～2巻―北崎拓
クピドの悪戯-虹玉- 全7巻―北崎拓
なんてっ探偵♥アイドル 全18巻―北崎拓／井上敏樹
海猿 全12巻―佐藤秀峰
ほしのふるまち 1～3巻―原秀則
日本一の男の魂 1～18巻―喜国雅彦
Dr.コトー診療所 1～21巻―山田貴敏
闇のイージス 1～26巻―七月鏡一／藤原芳秀
ひかりの空 1～23巻―かざま鋭二／坂田信弘
おしゃれ手帖 全10巻―長尾謙一郎
格闘美神 武龍〈ウーロン〉 0～16巻―石川優吾
RAINBOW-二舎六房の七人- 1～15巻-安部譲二／柿崎正澄
鉄腕バーディー 1～14巻―ゆうきまさみ
都立水商！ 1～14巻―室積光／猪熊しのぶ
クロサギ 1～12巻―黒丸／夏原 武
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絶望に効くクスリ-ONE ON ONE- 1～9巻-山田玲司
水の鳥 全1巻―山田玲司
Dr.コトー診療所特別編集 ナースの日記 全1巻―原 漬 和 也 ヤングサンデー編集部

http://www.youngsunday.com
にアクセスすると、ヤングサンデー情報が詳しくわかり、YSCをオンラインショップで購入することもできます。

北崎 拓
Taku Kitazaki
7月27日生まれ。兵庫県出身。AB型。
代表作「たとえばこんなラブ♡ソング」「ふたり」「ますらお」。
日本を代表する恋愛漫画家。

さくらんぼシンドローム

「クピドの悪戯II」

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Cupid II

Volume.2

Taku Kitazaki Presents

北崎拓

小学館

Young Sunday Comics

THE ARROWS THAT CUPID,
OF ROMAN LEGEND FAME WOULD
SHOOT AROUND AT A WHIM
HAD AN UNCANNY POWER
THAT LET HIM HAVE MEN AND
WOMEN'S HEARTS AT HIS BECK AND CALL.
ANY HUMAN BEING WHOSE HEART
HE PIERCED WITH A GOLDEN ARROW
WOULD AWAKEN TO LOVE,
AND THERE WAS NO PASSION
THAT WOULDN'T BE SQUELCHED
AFTER A SHOT FROM HIS ARROWS OF LEAD.
NOWADAYS, SHOULD CUPID EVER GET
IN A MISCHIEVOUS MOOD...

Young Sunday Comics

PREVIOUSLY.
AGAWA MUNENORI IS STRUGGLING
IN HIS FEMALE-DOMINATED
ENVIRONMENT WHEN A MYSTERIOUS YOUNG GIRL,
AMAMI RENA COMES TO HIM.
IF HE DOESN'T KISS HER, SHE'LL TURN BACK INTO A CHILD,
SHE SAYS TO AN INCREDULOUS AGAWA.
HE LISTENS TO HER TALK ABOUT THE NIGHT
THAT SHE ACTUALLY BECAME SMALLER,
AND AGREES TO KISS HER.
THEN THEY HEAD FOR A LOVE HOTEL...

さくらんぼシンドローム

「クピドの悪戯II」

Cherry Syndrome

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北崎 拓
Taku Kitazaki Presents

AGAWA-
SAN?!

HOLD
IT!

第9話: バカみたい。

¡OH

第9話　バカみたい。

CHAPTER 9:
RUBBISH

N...

NO..!!

I DON'T WANT...

STOP IT, AGAWA-SAN! STOP!!

ドスン

ガクガク

PFT...

AHAHA-
HAHAH!

6

HAHAHA.

"I DON'T
WANT
THAAAAT."

.....

HAHA ...

THE OTHER GUYS OUT THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN SERIOUS ABOUT IT, YOU KNOW?

YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL YOU WERE WITH ME.

OH, DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT.

EVEN FOR ME IT WAS A TOUGH CALL, TO BE HONEST.

ESPECIALLY WITH A CUTE GIRL LIKE YOU.

THIS IS YOUR FIRST TIME, ISN'T IT?

DATING A GUY, AND ALL THAT.

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN ...

OR WELL ...

.....

.....

I'VE BEEN A TEEN, TOO.

I UNDER-STAND.

AHHH.

.....

YOU'RE ALL IMPATIENCE STRANGELY ENOUGH, BUT YOU GOT NO CLUE WHAT YOU SHOULD DO ABOUT IT OR HOW TO DO IT..

YOU'RE KINDA LEFT OUT IN THE COLD, NAKED.

YOU THINK THE ANSWERS WILL COME TO YOU SOMEHOW, ONCE YOU'RE NO LONGER A CHILD.

...GROWING UP DOESN'T ALWAYS COME WITH ANSWERS, YOU SEE.

THING IS, —

AND THEN, YOU CAN'T WAIT TO GROW UP...

...AND I'M FEELING KINDA AWKWARD SAYING THIS, BUT...

IT MAKES ME SOUND LIKE AN OLD FART...

...AND YOU GOTTA FALL IN LINE WITH SOMETHING, WHATEVER THAT IS.

IF YOU MUST KNOW, IN SOCIETY YOU'RE BOUND BY MORE RULES THAN I'D EVER DARE TO COUNT—

...YOU GET TO BE A CAREFREE TEEN ONLY ONCE.

AND THEN THERE'S THE STUFF YOU ONLY GET TO DO THEN, AND YOU SHOULD HOLD NOTHING BACK AND GO FOR IT.

YOUR LIFE NEVER GETS ANY BRIGHTER THAN THAT.

HEH...

?

ONLY NOW DO I UNDERSTAND THIS, THOUGH.

RUBBISH.

YOU SAID SOMETHING... ABOUT SOUNDING LIKE AN OLD MAN...

YOU JUST FORGOT WHAT IT WAS LIKE, THAT'S ALL.

IF THERE'S ANY TRUTH TO THAT, YOU HAD A WONDERFUL ADOLESCENCE, AGAWA-SAN. CONGRAT LILATIONS.

THAT'S A LIE.

CAREFREE ADOLE-SCENCE, MY FOOT.

HM

.....

STUCK WITH BEING "MYSELF", AND DOOMED TO CARRY ON LIVING THAT WAY.

EVER SINCE "I" WAS BORN, "I" HAVE BEEN NOTHING IF NOT "ME".

I'D BECOME AN ADULT AT LAST...

LIVE AS GREAT A LIFE AS I COULD!

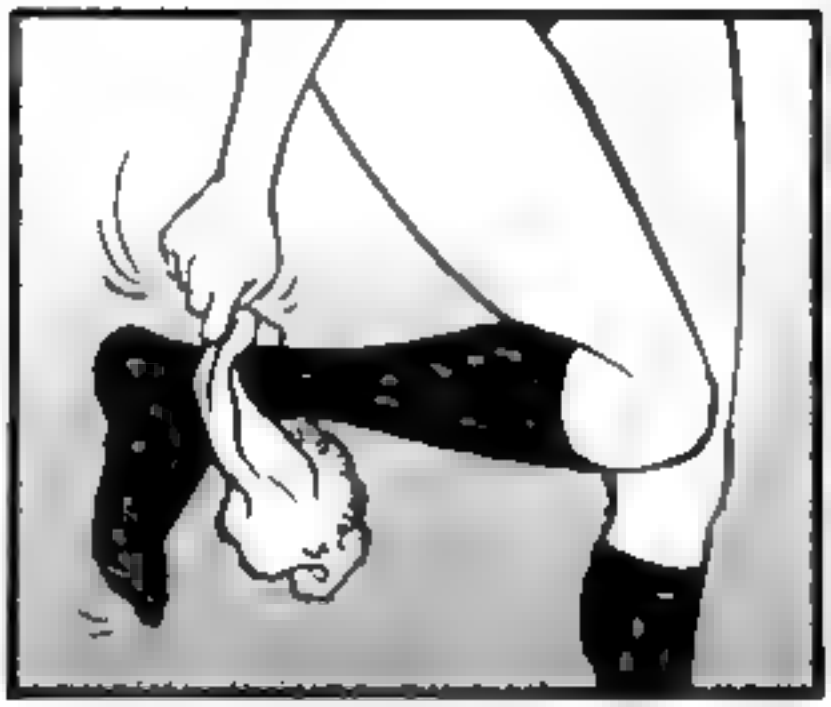
THAT'S A BIG LIE!!
LIFE NEVER GETS ANY BRIGHTER ..?!

ボン

ふるふる

EH?

WA!-WAIT A SEC...



18

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ME?

HEY, MUCCHAN_

!

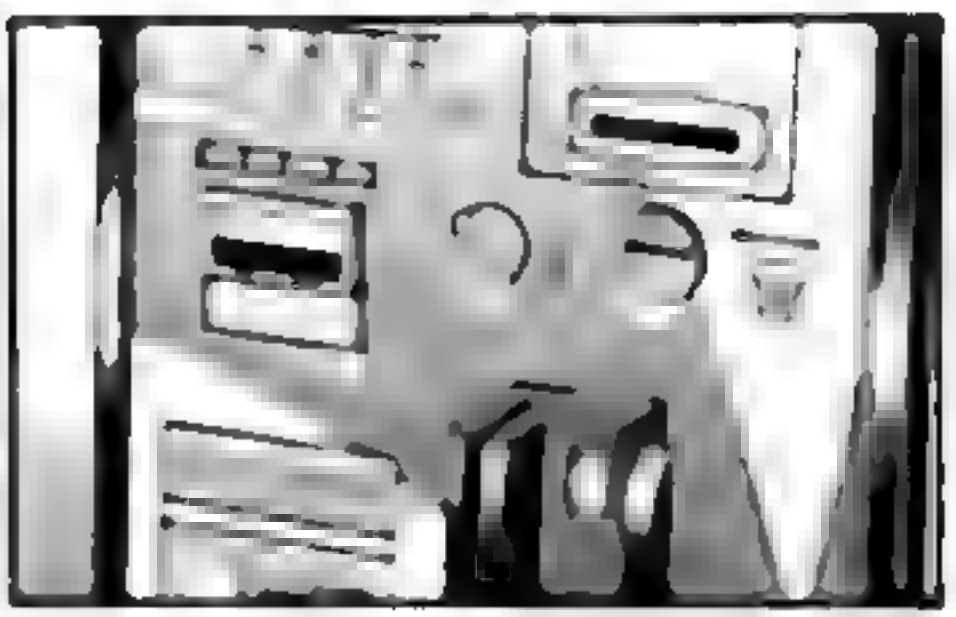
!

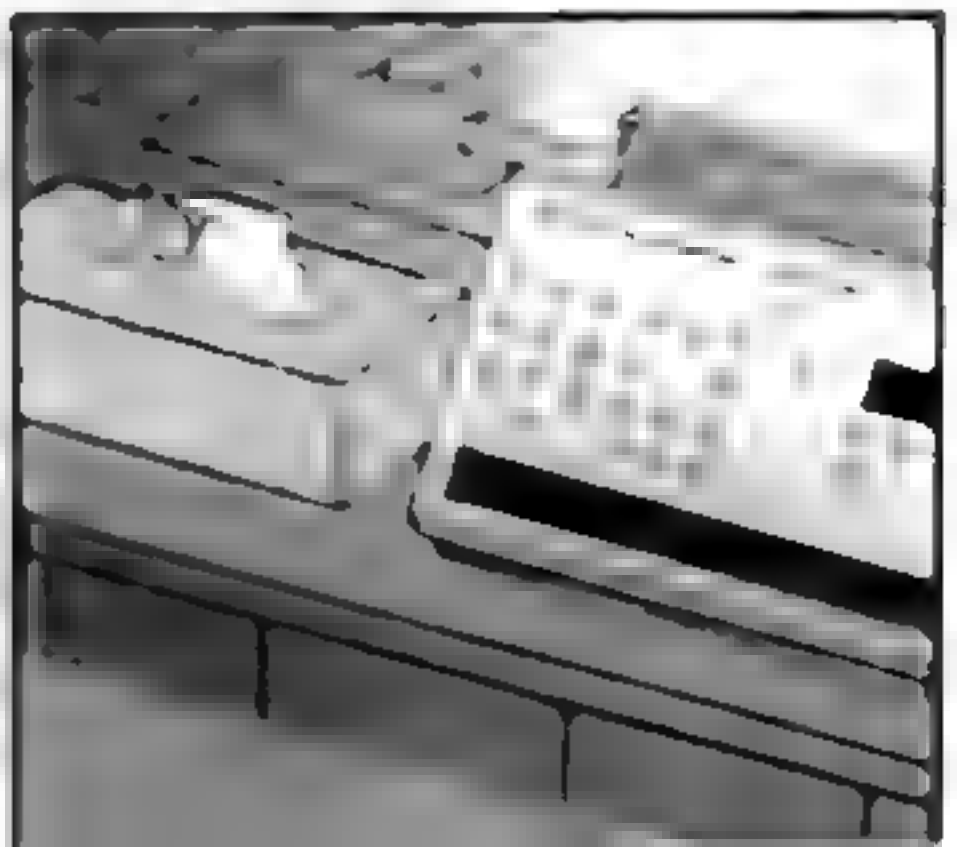
YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT TO ME.

FEEL FREE. I JUST WANNA BE AN ADULT AGAIN.

CHAPTER 25:
LET'S DO THIS

Apt. 1





THIS IS SILLY ...

THI...

...IF THAT MEANS I CAN BECOME AN ADULT.

IT'S A SMALL PRICE TO PAY ...

!!

5

……!

DON'T!

DON'T YOU TREAT ME LIKE I'M AN IDIOT!!

_KOF

COUGH_

_IF YOU JUST GET NAKED AND DO THE DEED WITH HIM/

YOU YOU THINK EVERY GUY'S GONNA BE HAPPY_

THAT'S

_JUST

A ARE YOU O_

COUGH COUGH!

PISS OFF!!

GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!!

OW!

HE'S ME

SLAP

MY PARENTS WON'T BE COMING HOME, TODAY.

UH... UUH...

EH?!

MUCCHAN?

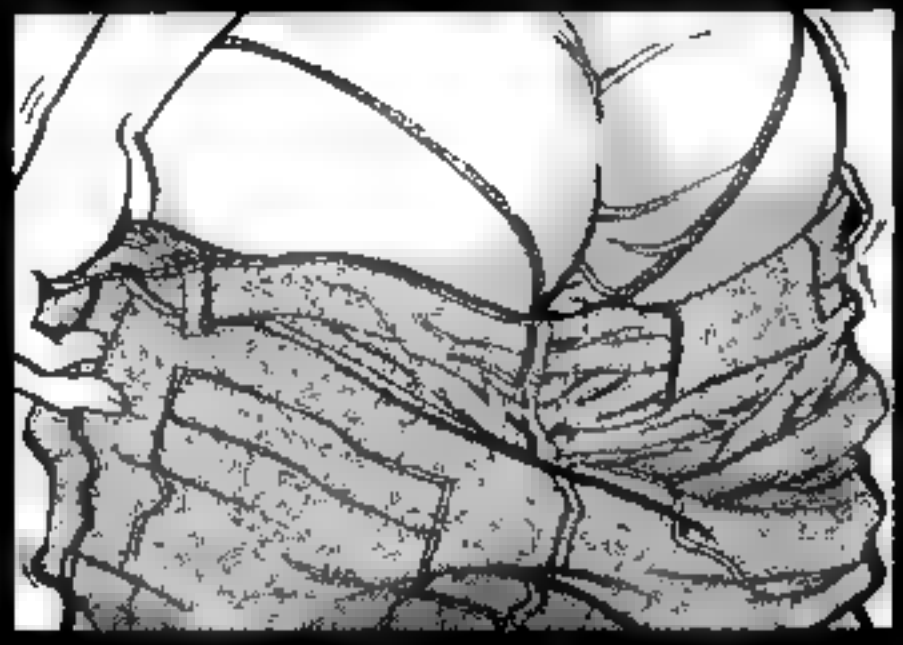
!!

ドッキ ドッキ ドッキ

……!!

ドッキ

……



FIRST, WE NEED TO TALK.

WAIT ...

!!

YURI..!

IT'S ABOUT ME_

YOU SEE, MUCCHAN...

!!

I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE ...

UUH...

UH...

AND THEN WE'RE DONE.

I'LL MAKE LOVE WITH YOU ONE LAST TIME...

!!

ガッ

ガッ

!!

!!

SORRY_

SLAM!

ALSO_

I DON'T HAVE TO SHOUT

_WAS A LIE.

THAT_

YOU ARE RIGHT.

WHAT I SAID ABOUT ADOLESCENCE BEING THE BEST THING EVER

I REMEMBER NOW_

.....

...HAS BEEN A LONG SUCCESSION OF HARDSHIPS.

MY OWN ADOLESCENCE —

ONLY GOT INVOLVED WITH THE GIRLS WHO APPROACHED ME...

I JUST READ THE MANUAL AND ACTED IN KIND. STUDIED THE RULES OF THE GAME.

I DON'T THINK I EVER FELL SERIOUSLY IN LOVE... PROBABLY NOT.

I SAID SOMETHING ABOUT BEING A WOMAN-HATER...

WAS JUST ME BEING A COWARD. I'VE BEEN ONE EVER SINCE MY GIRLFRIEND DUMPED ME WHEN I WAS 16.

BUT THAT...

AND I THOUGHT THAT'S WHAT GROWN UPS' LOVE WAS ABOUT...

I WOULDN'T HOOK UP WITH A GIRL TILL SHE'D CONFESSED HER LOVE FIRST SO WHEN WE BROKE UP, FOR WHATEVER REASON:

NATURAL DEGRADATION OR ANYTHING, I NEVER GOT HURT.

...BUT I STILL WASN'T OVER MY 16-YEAR-OLD'S LOVE...

WHEN I STARTED TO WORK, ...

...I THOUGHT I HAD BECOME A GROWN MAN.

FROM THAT TIME ONWARD, I'D BEEN FORGETTING WHAT IS WAS TO FALL IN LOVE.

I'VE JUST REALIZED I TOLD THEM TO YOU

WHEN SHE DUMPED ME, I WISHED I COULD HAVE LOOKED HER IN THE FACE, BUT THE WORDS I COULDN'T TELL HER BECAUSE I COULD BARELY HOLD MYSELF TOGETHER.

I REALLY ...

I...

I REALLY LOVED HER...

SURE.

THANK YOU.

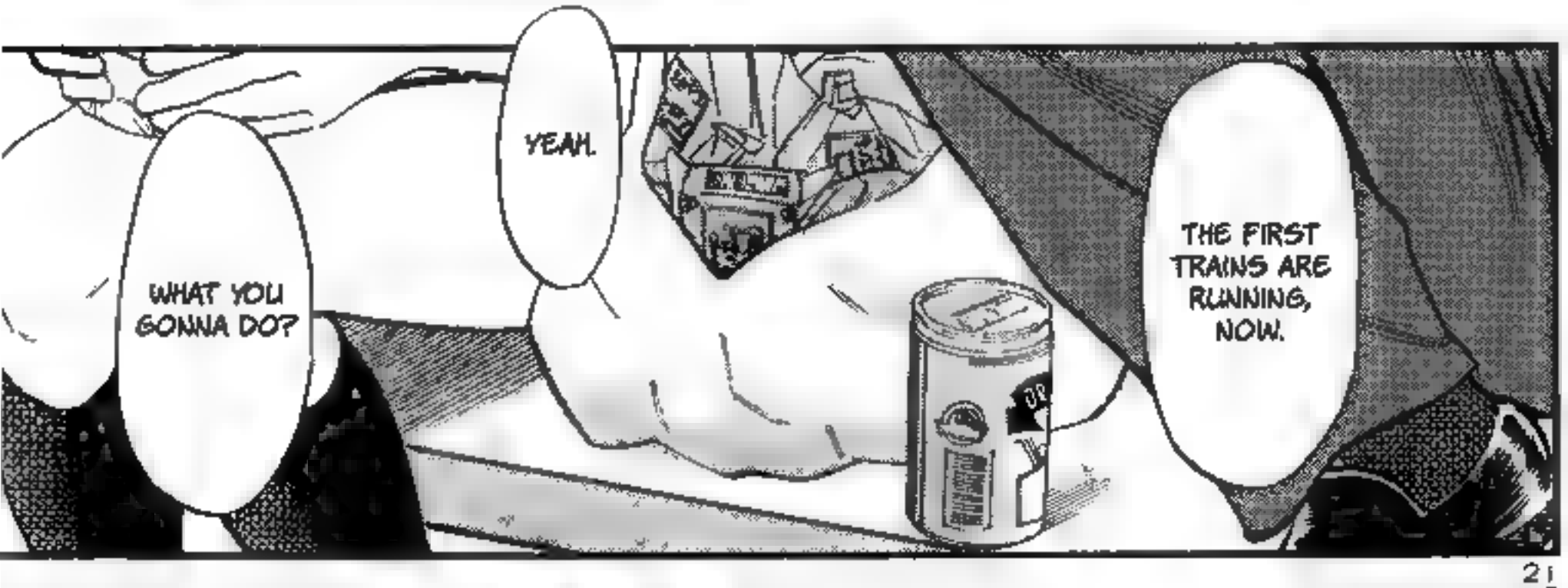
BUT...

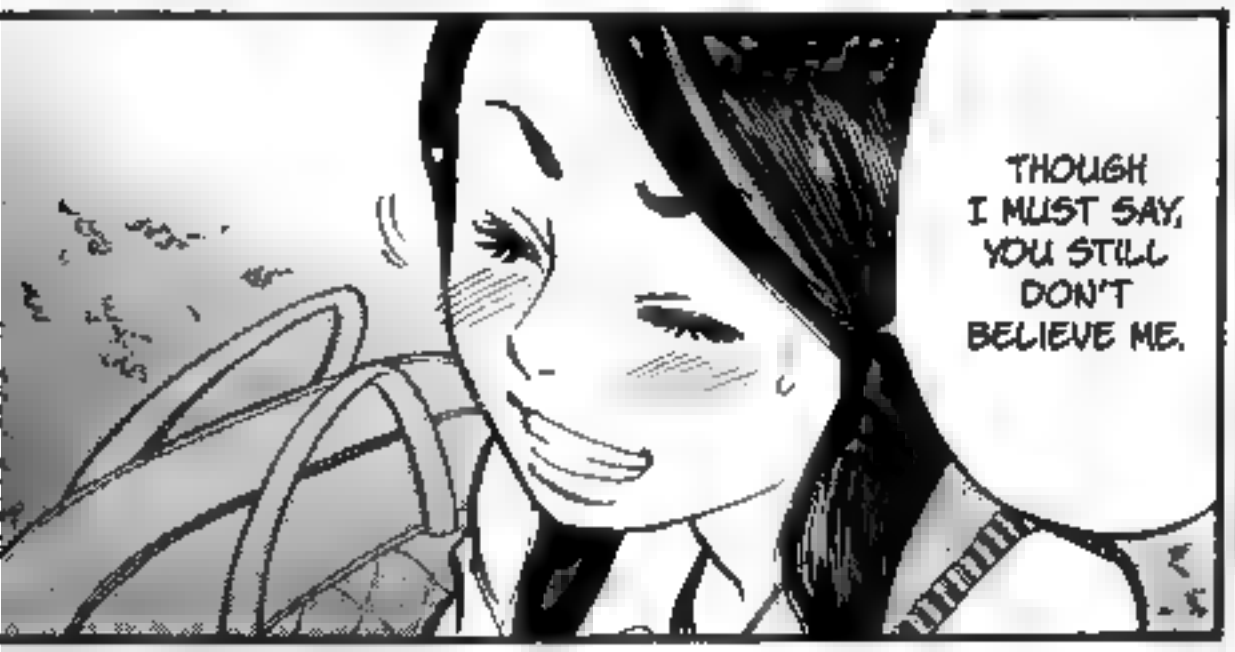
GET YOURSELF A GOOD LOVE STORY.

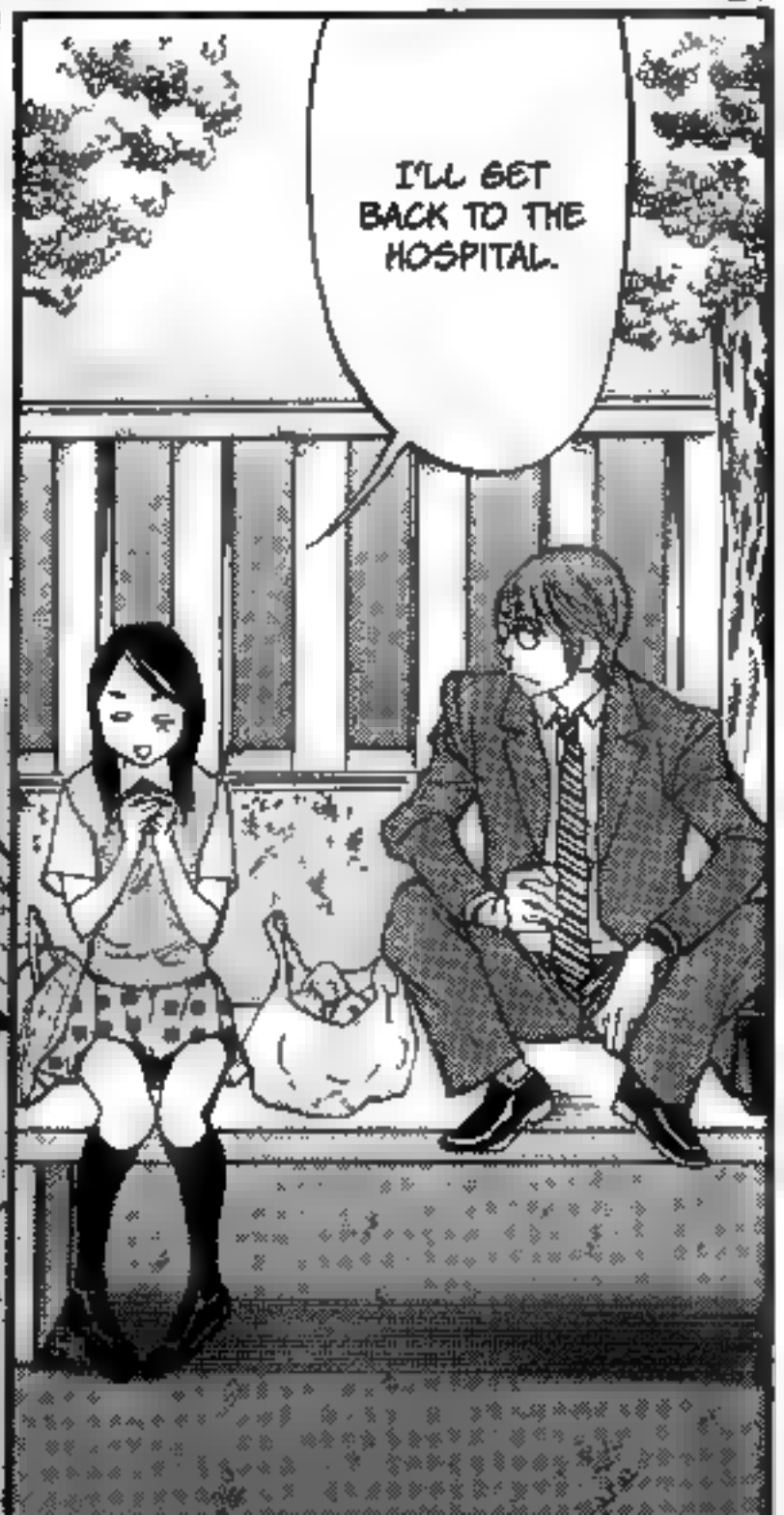
...YOU SHOULDN'T GIVE YOURSELF TO A MAN YOU DON'T EVEN LOVE. DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.

I'M SORRY.
YES.

カタカタ…


WHAT YOU GONNA DO?
YEAH.
THE FIRST TRAINS ARE RUNNING, NOW.


THOUGH I MUST SAY, YOU STILL DON'T BELIEVE ME.


I'LL GET BACK TO THE HOSPITAL.

NAH, …
I DO BELIEVE YOU.

WELL, KISS ME, THEN.

AHAHA.

THE NIGHT'S ALMOST OVER.

AT LEAST FOR TONIGHT, I DO.

JU- JUST KID- DING.

COME ON...

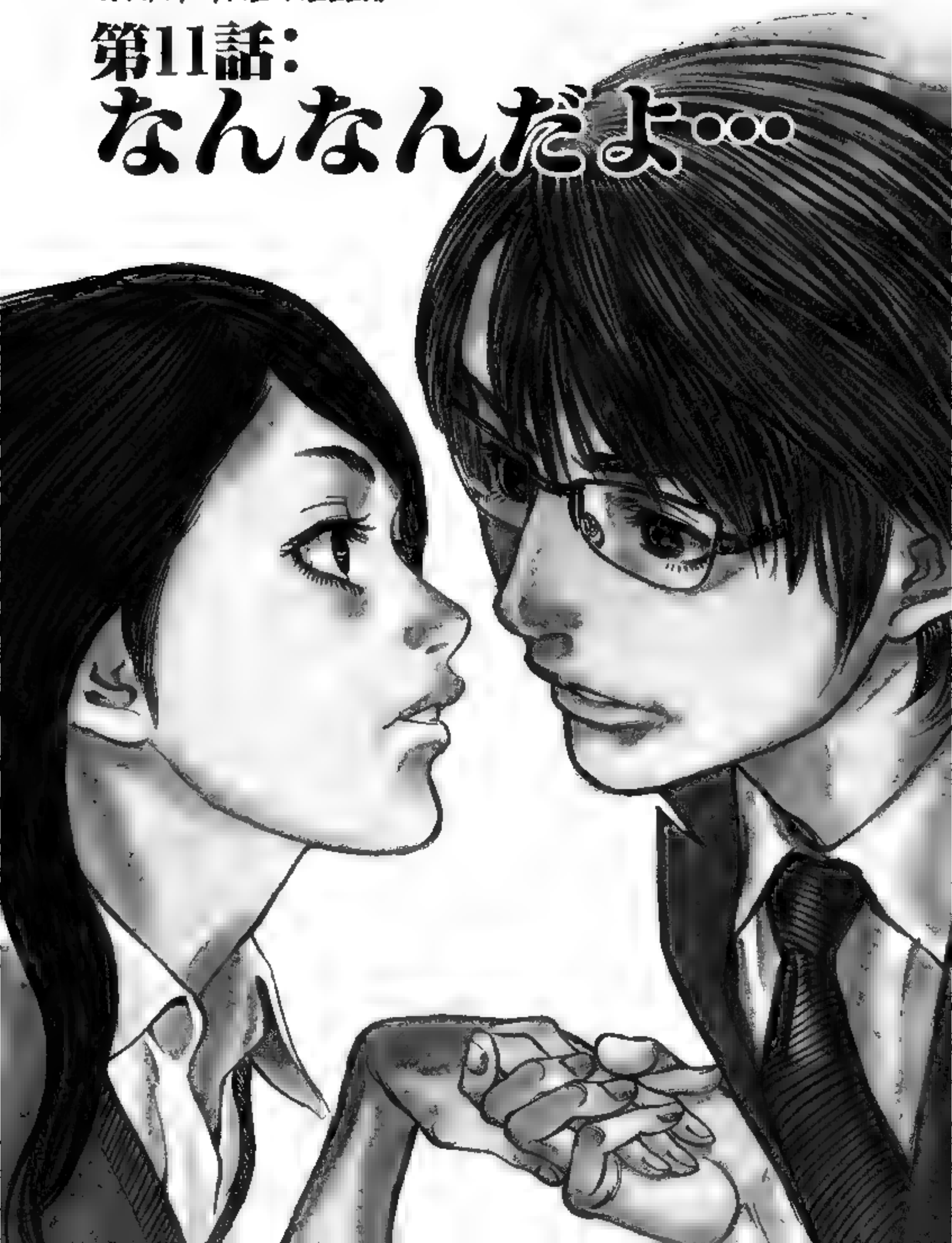
JUST TO SAY GOOD- BYE.

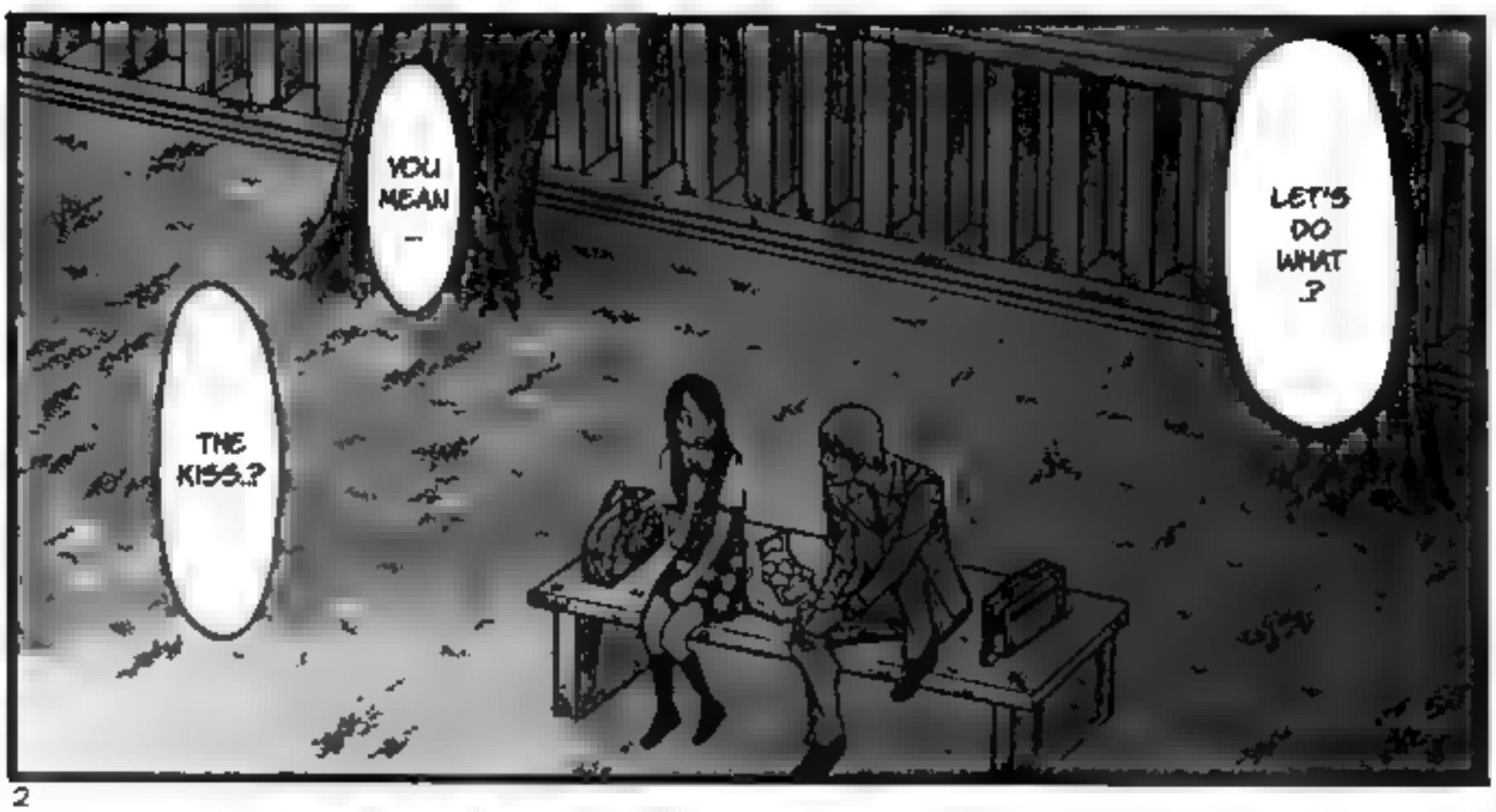
LET'S DO THIS.

SURE.

CHAPTER 11 -
WHAT THE HELL.?

第11話:
なんなんだよ…

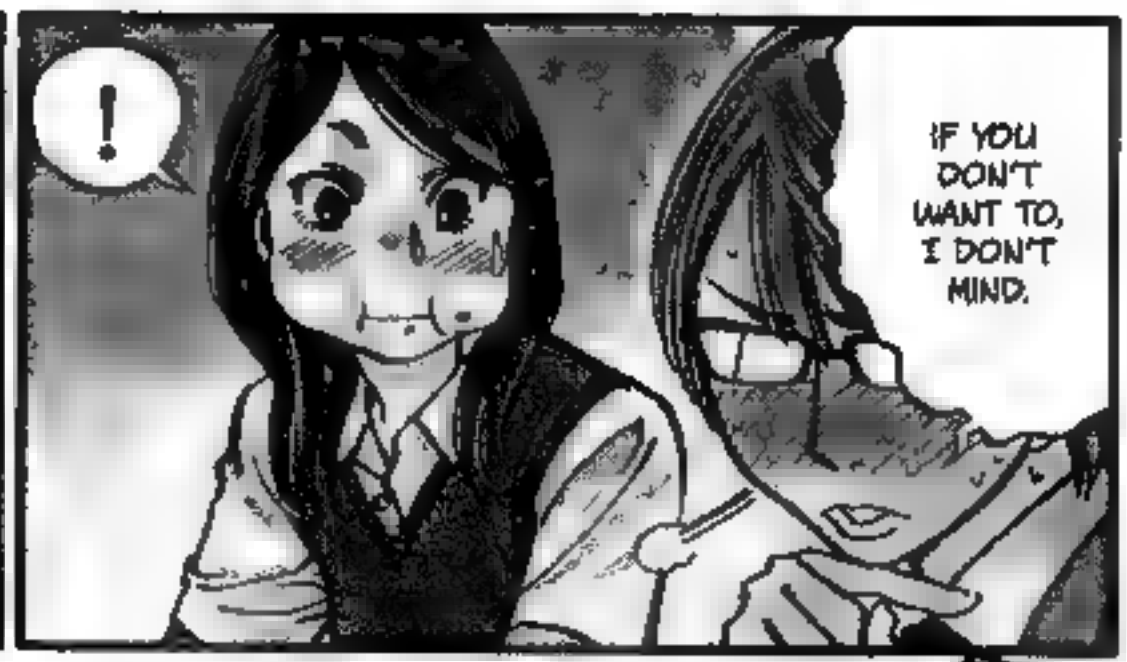



YOU MEAN —
THE KISS..?
LET'S DO WHAT ..?

2

JUST TO SAY GOODBYE... TALK ABOUT A LAME PRETEXT!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO BROUGHT THAT UP, AREN'T YOU.

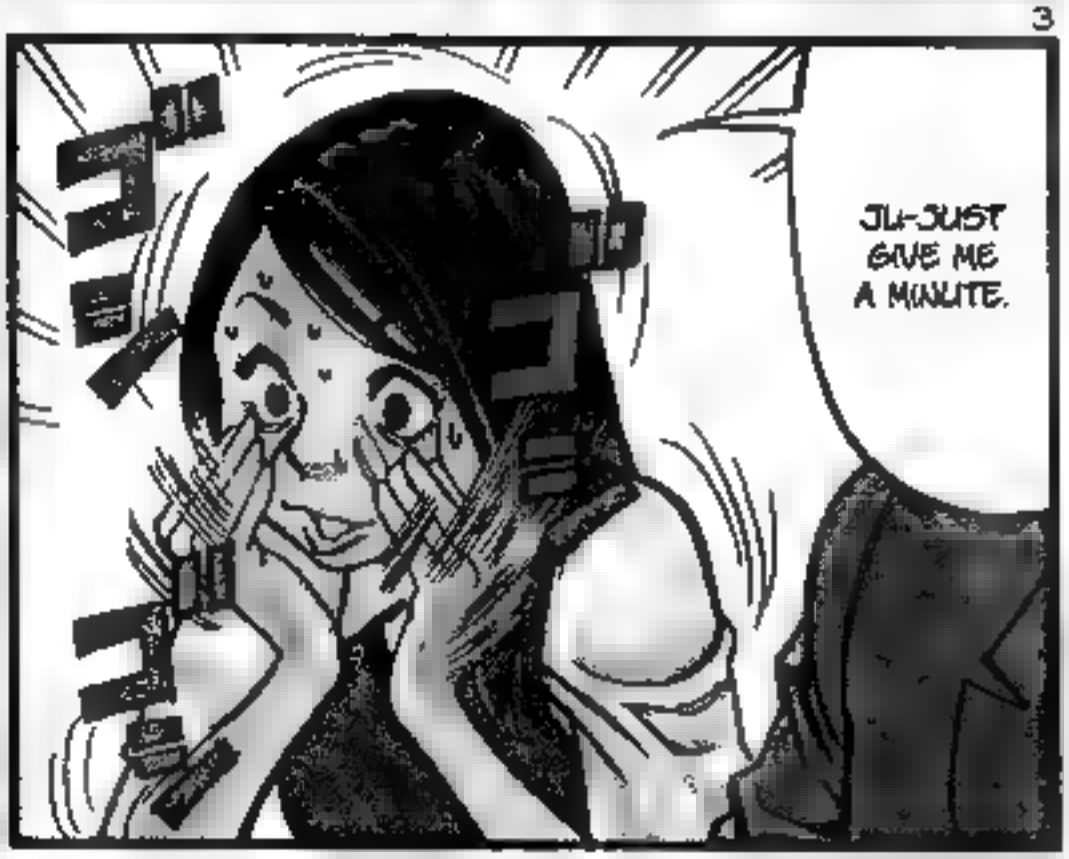
ㅠㅠㅠ


!
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO, I DON'T MIND.

.....

DO IT! PLEASE KISS ME!!

MAN ...
YOU LOOK SCARY ...


JU-JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE.

I THOUGHT A SIMPLE PECK ON THE LIPS COULDN'T BE SUCH A BIG DEAL...

DON'T ASK ME WHY

WELL, SELF-STYLED AMAMI RENA, WITH "RENA" IN KANA WRITING.

BUT INSTEAD, I FOUND MYSELF ACTUALLY THINKING OF KISSING AND EMBRACING THE GIRL. RENA.

ON THAT NIGHT...

AND I DID, SOME SERIOUS YELLING BACK, TOO.

I GOT YELLED AT LIKE THERE WAS NO TOMOR-ROW.

THAT WASN'T HAPPENED IN A WHILE. WHEN I WAS STILL A KID

SO KIND AND CONSIDERATE.
SHE
TICAL

I HID
AND I

GO AHEAD.

SORRY I KEPT YOU WAITING.

SORRY ABOUT THAT.

I'VE CAUSED YOU MUCH TROUBLE.

STILL SCARY.

BUT_

.....

THANK YOU.

ALL IN ALL, I'M GLAD IT WAS YOU RATHER THAN ANYONE ELSE.

.....

THANKS.

SAME HERE.

WHO KNOWS?

EEEEER. WHAT FOR?

WHY WOULD YOU THANK ME?

.....

HAH

HAH

HAH

RENA?

HAH!

HAH!

!!

HM?!

HHMM?!

HAAAHH!

HAAAHH!

BWAH!

JUST AS I THOUGHT ...

TASTES LIKE TOBACCO AND COFFEE...

RE... RENA?

HA?

ヒィッ

……!!

WAL_

RENA_?!

OUCH …

14

!!

NOT A TRAINED ONE, HOWEVER —

DON'T ASK ME WHY, BUT I HAD THAT IMAGE IN MY HEAD OF A LARGE AFGHAN HOUND PLAYFULLY LEANING ON ME.

HOP

HOP

16

..AH!

AHAH!

SWIPE

LOOKS LIKE I'M COMPLETELY HEALED!!

I'M CURED.

NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT!!

I'M NOT HUNGRY AT ALL!

MY PRINCE!

THANK YOU!

BYE BYE"

SEE YOU!

!!

RENA?!

WHAT THE HELL ?

WHAT ABOUT THE FOOD, EH.?

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH THAT TRUCK-LOAD OF STUFF FROM THE CONVINI.?

A PAIN IN THE NECK, ALL THE WAY...

...WOULD HAVE A SMALL, BUT DEFINITE IMPACT ON THE REST OF MY LIFE.

THAT ONE KISS...

AT THIS POINT I COULD ALREADY FEEL IT.

第12話：
気になってます。

WHAT DO I DO WITH ALL THAT FOODSTUFF I BOUGHT..?

DANG ...

WITH THAT SMILE ON HER FACE, RENA QUICKLY DISAPPEARED INTO THE MORNING SUN.

BYE BYE!

第12話：気になってます。

CHAPTER 12 - I LIKE YOU

SHE WAS STILL DOWNY, SHE WAS.

TO THINK WE WENT TO A LOVE HOTEL AND IT WENT AS FAR AS SHE LETTING ME SEE HER NAKED.

THEN, THE REST MIGHT DO WELL FOR TONIGHT'S DINNER...

MAYBE I SHOULD MAKE A FEW LUNCHBOXES, AND BRING THEM TO WORK.

AND BY QUICKLY, I MEAN *REALLY* QUICKLY.

IT WOULD DEFINITELY NOT HURT TO GET SOME REST —

SEEING AS I'VE BEEN AWAKE ALL NIGHT, AND ALL.

MAYBE I SHOULD SQUEEZE IN AN HOUR OF SLEEP BEFORE I GO TO WORK.

I'VE CUT MYSELF INSIDE THE MOUTH.

OUCH ...

I WENT TO WORK WITHOUT EVEN A LITTLE NAP, ULTIMATELY.

LOVE ONLY TAKES THAT ONE KISS FOR THE BRIEFEST OF MOMENTS.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

I KISSED

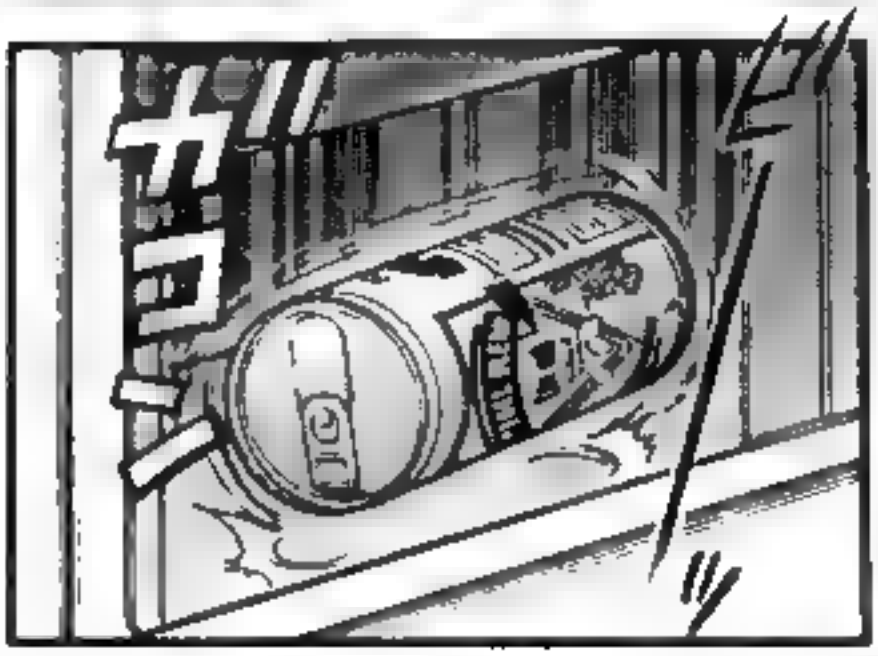
BUT MY "KISS" WITH HER BROUGHT THINGS I'D FORGOTTEN BACK TO THE SURFACE.

OK ...

LET'S TAKE CARE OF THAT POP DRAFT FOR THE OSAWA DRUG-STORE.

...I'D BEEN STIFLING ALL THE SPONTANEOUS FEELINGS THAT HAD TO DO WITH SERIOUSLY FALLING IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE.

EVER SINCE THAT HEARTBREAK WHEN I WAS IN 10TH GRADE,



I'M DOZING OFF!!
SHOOT!

BATTERIES FULL. NO MORE SLEEPING!
AAAAAH!

……!?

AND HERE I WAS, THINKING PEOPLE USUALLY AREN'T HERE THAT EARLY IN THE MORNING...

びくっ

びくん。

SO-SORRY FOR REJECTING YOUR OFFER YESTERDAY. I KNOW THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN EVERY DAY!

ASOU-SAN.

ガシッ

YOU ALREADY HAD AN APPOINTMENT ELSEWHERE, DIDN'T YOU? I DON'T MIND.

FAIR

LOOKS LIKE YOU MANAGED TO HAVE THOSE GLASSES REPLACED SOMEHOW.

YOU STILL HAD ANOTHER SPARE PAIR, APPARENTLY ...

...SU-SURE.

THIS IS SOMEWHAT...

WELL NO. I DID GO BACK TO CHANGE...

UNLESS YOU ALREADY HAVE A CHANGE OF CLOTHES WAITING FOR YOU HERE?

EEER... HUM...

UH...

WEARING YESTERDAY'S CLOTHES AND BROKEN GLASSES WOULD MAKE A RATHER BAD IMPRESSION ON OUR FAVORITE CUSTOMERS, YOU SEE.

OF COURSE, YOU'RE FREE TO GO ANYWHERE YOU LIKE AND DO WHATEVER YOU PLEASE AFTER WORK, BUT YOU SEE.

LIKE WHEN SHE'S ASKING UNCOMFORTABLE QUESTIONS ABOUT MY PRIVACY

SHE SOUNDS EXACTLY LIKE GOTOU-SAN, SHE DOES...

ON TOP OF ALL THAT, FACTOR IN YOUR SLEEPY-LOOKING FACE, ...

...AS WELL AS YOUR BLOODSHOT EYES. ARE YOU REALLY PLANNING TO VISIT OUR CLIENTS THIS WAY?

NO, MA'AM.

SICKLY-LOOKING PEOPLE SELLING COSMETICS --

I DID SEE A GIRL BUT...

ME? WORRYING?

THE... THE PERSON I MET IS NO ONE YOU SHOULD CONCERN YOURSELF ABOUT OVERMUCH.

ゴトン

WHA-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO ASKED YOU ABOUT THAT?

.....

NOT MY GIRLFRIEND OR ANYTHING OF THE SORT ...

SHE WAS A TEEN-AGER WHO'D RUN AWAY FROM HOME...

.....

I'M NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN YOUR PRIVATE LIFE.

SPARE ME YOUR OUT-OF-PLACE ASSUMPTIONS, WILL YOU?

BUT I LIKE YOU AN AWFUL LOT, YOU KNOW.

.....

.....

...WHA...

YOU LIKE...

YOU MEAN...

AH, ...

SHIMATANI-BUCHOU, GOOD MORNING!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THAT WAS FAST. YOU FAIL TO DIS-APPOINT ME.

I'VE PREPARED THE MATERIAL FOR TODAY MORNING'S REUNION AND PUT IT ON YOUR DESK.

MOR-NING.

10

DID I JUST SPOUT OUT WHAT I THINK I DID?

JESUS

WE- WELL, IT'S NOTHING -

IS HE GONNA BE OKAY?

ALWAYS ACTING ALL SUPERIOR AND LECTURING ME

SHE'S THE ELITE OF THE COMPANY

ASOU-SAN HAS A GOOD GRASP OF MY WEAKNESSES, SINCE I CONVEYED THEM DURING THE OBSERVATION

THERE'S NO FORGETTING IT

AND THAT SIDEWAYS GLANCE I HAD AT HER WHEN SHE WAS ALL ALONE

SHE'S SO CUTE WHEN SHE SMILES

BUT SHE DOES HAVE HER DITZY MOMENTS...

REIKO'S FAULT, MAYBE.

AM I FALLING IN LOVE, HERE...?

GOTTA BE CAREFUL HERE. MY USUAL SELF IS THREATENING TO FLY RIGHT OUT THE WINDOW.

AND THE LACK OF SLEEP DOESN'T HELP.

IT'S HOT.

GOOD DAY

Camel

SHE'S IN THE WAITING ROOM AT THE MOMENT. ROOTING

WHERE IS KAGO-SAN?

I'VE BROUGHT THE BUSINESS OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT MONTH WITH ME.

AAAH SAN.

12

UH?

GOTOU-SAN IS IN THERE WITH HER.

カチャ…

THEY'RE SMILING FAINTLY WHILE AT IT!!

AND …

THEY'RE SITTING FACE TO FACE, GLARING AT EACH OTHER.

GOTOU-SAN START ED…

WHA, WHAT OF IT?

AT FIRST, EVERYBODY WAS DISCUSSING YESTERDAY'S MUSICAL PROGRAM.

EH? YOU DO, KAGO-SAN?

HEY, I KNOW ABOUT THESE.

THAT'S WHEN KAGO-CHAN WENT —

I'D SING THEIR SONGS ALONG, REMINDING MYSELF OF MY SCHOOL GIRL DAYS.

GOOD THING ㎰-CLUB ARE REFORMING.

MY MOM USED TO SAY THE SAME THING WHEN I WATCHED TV WITH HER, AND SHE'D SING ALONG, TOO.

BUT ...

I'M CONSID-ERING ACTING LIKE I DIDN'T SEE ANY-THING_

IF YOU WANNA FLEE, YOU CAN LEAVE THE BUSINESS OBJECTIVES DOCUMENTS TO US.

WHAT NOW?

カコ?

JESUS CHRIST.

ずるっ

AS A SUPERVISOR, I'LL GET INVOLVED EITHER WAY...

ムラムラ

...IT'S GONNA DEVOLVE INTO A HUGE SHITSTORM OF A FIGHT SOMEDAY...

IF I LEAVE THE CRAP TO ACCUMULATE JUST BECAUSE IT DOESN'T SMELL,

...

THESE ARE FOR WORK. BY THE WAY, I'VE GOT PLENTY OF THEM BACK HOME, SO I CAN HAVE FUN SWAPPING THEM.

THEY'VE BEEN PART OF MY LOOK WELL BEFORE IT BECAME TRENDY.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THESE LOOKED SO CLASSY ON YOU.

BESPECTACLED BEAUTIES ARE FAIRLY TRENDY, YOU KNOW.

I SUGGEST YOU BOTH SPEAK YOUR MINDS RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW!!

ENOUGH WITH THE MUTUAL EVALUATION!

GUESS HE'D BEEN KEEPING THAT DOWN FOR A WHILE. IT HAD TO GET OUT.

EEEEEE~

HE SAID IT.

AGAIN? FUN...

AH...

THERE'S NO HELPING IT.

THE TWO OF YOU DON'T GET ALONG.

ズキ

BUT LETTING THAT GETTING IN THE WAY OF YOUR WORK IS NOT THE ADULT THING TO DO!

WHO ARE YOU, MISTER COMPETENT?! WHAT DID YOU DO WITH AGAWA ?!

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT!

WOOOOW

WHOA.

.....

THEN, WE CAN WORK OUT SOMETHING POSITIVE OUT OF IT.

IN THE MEANTIME, YOU JUST COME RIGHT UP AND SAY WHAT'S ON YOUR MINDS.

I'LL BE LISTENING!

ドヤ

WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO COME BARGING IN AND SHOUTING FOR?!

UH?

DUH?

WE WERE JUST HAVING A LITTLE CHAT ON OUR BREAK TIME!

WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE REPEATING ALL THE BAD RUMORS YOU HEAR ABOUT?

ガラッ

WHAT KIND OF MAN TRIES TO SQUEEZE HIMSELF INTO A CONVERSATION BETWEEN GIRLS ANYWAY..?

UNTHINKABLE!

ええええええええ~

UUUUH...

WHY, THAT HOT BLOODEDNESS SPELL WASN'T QUITE THAT BAD.

THAT WASN'T LIKE YOU, ASAMA-SAN. QUITE COOL, ACTUALLY.

17

HAVEN'T TOUCHED ANY INAPPROPRIATE SUBSTANCES NOW, HAVE WE?

THIS IS NO GOOD

THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME TODAY

GUESS I'VE BEEN BUILDING UP TOO MUCH TENSION THE ENTIRE WORLD SEEMS TO BE SPINNING AROUND...

I THINK I'LL CALL IT A DAY. RETURN HOME AND GET SOME SLEEP

LET'S GO

THE PACE OF MY LIFE IS GETTING OUT OF CONTROL AND IT'S YOUR FAULT

AAAH, REIKA

マギ"

ドギ

ASOU-SAN.

UH.

SORRY I'M LEAVING EARLIER.

ULHM ...

WE... WELL

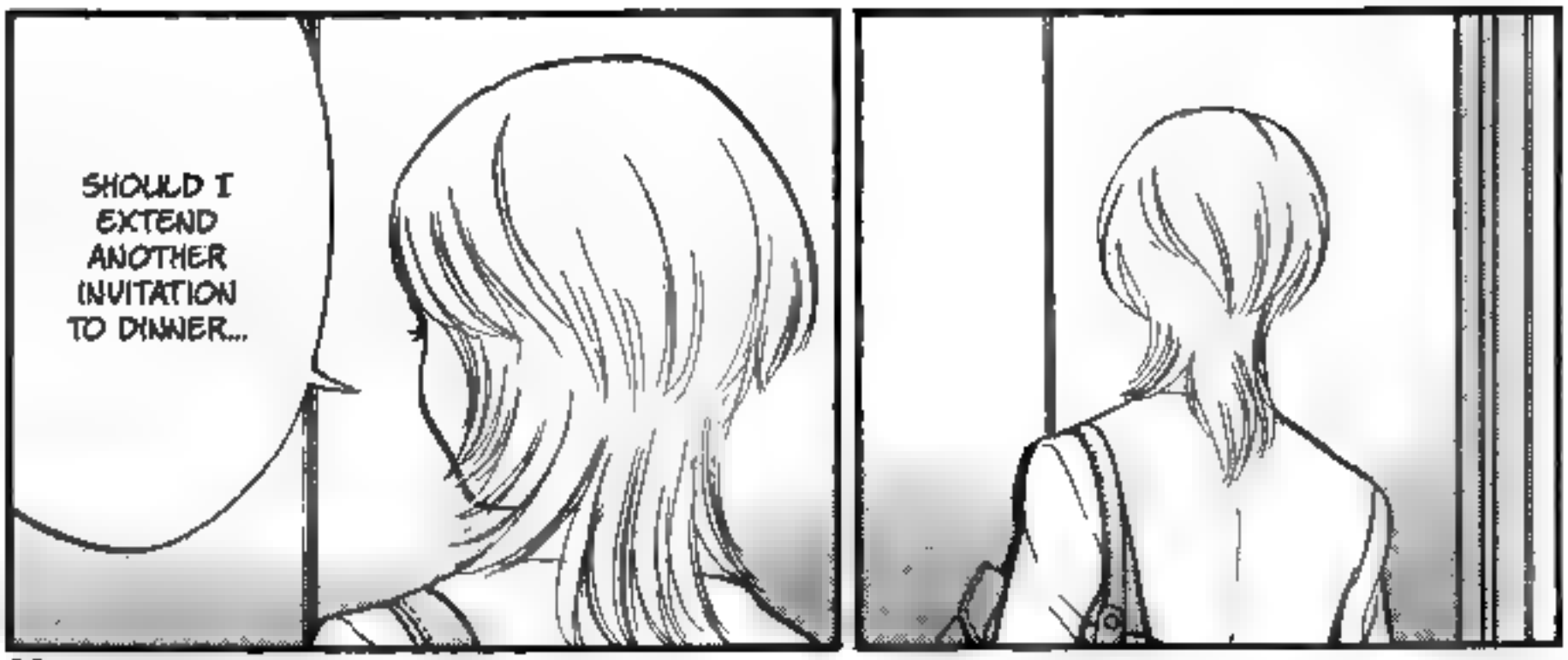
YOU WENT FAST ABOUT THAT BUSI-NESS.

YOU'RE ALREADY GOING?

I'M... NOT FEELING ALL THAT GREAT TODAY, SO I'LL JUST GO HOME AND LEAVE IT AT THAT...

NO... I'M NOT.

ARE YOU BUSY WITH ANOTHER APPOINTMENT TODAY?


SHOULD I EXTEND ANOTHER INVITATION TO DINNER...

_WOULD YOU REFUSE ME AGAIN?

CHAPTER 13:
A SNOWBALL'S CHANCES IN HELL..!

第13話：
これっぽっちも…

……

ﾊｧ…

ﾊﾅｾ！

2

BUT HEY! HE'S FROM R&D ORIGINALLY, YOU SEE?

…YELLING SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF "HOW THE HELL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO COMPETE WITH MIKADOU'S PRODUCTS IF WE JUST FOLLOW THE LEADER?!"

…THAT'S WHEN SHIMATANI-BUCHOU STORMED IN DEVELOPMENT.

AND THEN,

ASOU SAYAKO INVITED ME TO DINNER, RIGHT OUT OF THE BLUE.

AH HAH ...

BY NOW, THOUGH, IT'S PRETTY MUCH TURNED OUT TO BE A FACADE.

OF COURSE, SHE'D HAD A READILY AVAILABLE REASON FOR THAT SEVERAL DAYS AGO. "TO MAKE UP FOR YOUR BROKEN GLASSES!"

I'M NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN YOUR PRIVATE LIFE.

...AFTER WHAT I SAID TO HER...

THIS MORN-ING...

TODAY ...

BUT...

I...

I LIKE YOU AN AWFUL LOT, YOU KNOW.

AM I RIGHT TO INTERPRET WHAT YOU SAID AS A CONFESSION?

...SHE INVITED ME TO PICK UP THIS CONVERSATION WHERE WE LEFT OFF.

SO OF COURSE...

ABOUT THIS MORNING.. WE WEREN'T QUITE DONE TALKING YET

AGAWA-KUN...

I WAS REALLY TAKEN ABACK, HONESTLY ...

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HEAR SUCH A THING FROM A BOY YOUNGER THAN ME...

OF COU-RSE.

OF...

BUT IT REMINDED ME I WAS A WOMAN. THAT HADN'T HAPPENED IN A LONG TIME...

...THOUGH I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU WEREN'T SO... TENSE AND DISTANT AROUND ME.

EVEN WHEN YOU'RE GIVING IT YOUR ALL AT WORK, YOU'RE STILL BEAUTIFUL...

ASOU-SAN... YOU'RE ALWAYS VERY FEMININE.

.....

AGAWA-KUN...

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO IN THREE DAYS WITHOUT EVEN SOME PRELIMINARY WORK TO START WITH?

THREE DAYS AGO, HE WAS LIKE "PUT THAT PROJECT TOGETHER." CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

BUT FROM START TO FINISH, SHE KEPT TALKING ABOUT WORK ALL THE WAY

THA-THAT'S MY WORK...

TO THINK I'D GONE THROUGH THE TROUBLE TO PROCESSING TWO MONTHS' WORTH OF SALES DATA.

I HAVEN'T SLEPT AT ALL, AND THAT PLUS THE ALCOHOL ARE MAKING ME SLEEPY...

YAWN...

CRAP_

"COME TO THINK OF IT"?

COME TO THINK OF IT, I HAD YOU DO THAT ONE FOR ME, AGANA-KUN.

AH_

HE DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO READ IT PROPERLY THAT HE ALREADY REACHED HIS CONCLUSIONS. HE HAD NO INTENTION TO USE IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

IT DIDN'T EVEN PROVE USEFUL_

WELL_ IT WAS NO-THING ...

HOW VERY THOUGHTFUL OF YOU!

WHAT I'M SAYING IS, HE MEANT TO GO ALONG WITH YAMAMURA-SAN'S PROJECT ALL ALONG. HIS DECISION WAS MADE FROM THE BEGINNING.

YOU DON'T GET IT?

EH?

HE HAD ME DO THIS SO HE COULD GET IN YAMAMURA-SHOUMU'S GOOD GRACES, THAT'S IT.

TN: SHOUMU = EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

UH-HUH ...

...ONLY TO CAVE IN AND WITHDRAW MY PROJECT IN THE END, THUS CURRYING FAVOR YAMAMURA-SAN.

BUT THINGS BETWEEN SHIMATANI-BUCHOU AND YAMAMURA-SAN ARE RATHER AWKWARD, SO HE PULLED ME OUT OF THE BOX AND PUT ME IN COMPETITION WITH HIM. ...

THE RUMOR THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING ON BETWEEN HER AND SHIMATANI-BUCHOU...

...WAS A LOAD OF BULL, APPARENTLY.

THAT'S SO MUCH LIKE HIM.

...I'M STILL BAFFLED TO FIND OUT THINGS DIDN'T WORK OUT SO WELL FOR HER ON THE JOB TODAY...

THAT SAID...

...SHE MIGHT NOT EVEN REMEMBER IT...

AS FOR WHAT I TOLD HER BEFORE THAT IMPORTANT MEETING, ...

I LIKE YOU AN AWFUL LOT, YOU KNOW.

SOMEONE SHE COULD COMPLAIN TO TO TAKE THE EDGE OFF...

I GUESS SHE MERELY PICKED ME BECAUSE SHE NEEDED SOMEONE_

BE HONEST WITH ME.

NOBODY LIKES TO HEAR SOMEBODY ELSE BITCHING ABOUT THEIR WORK.

UM- UUUUUH!

AM I BORING YOU?

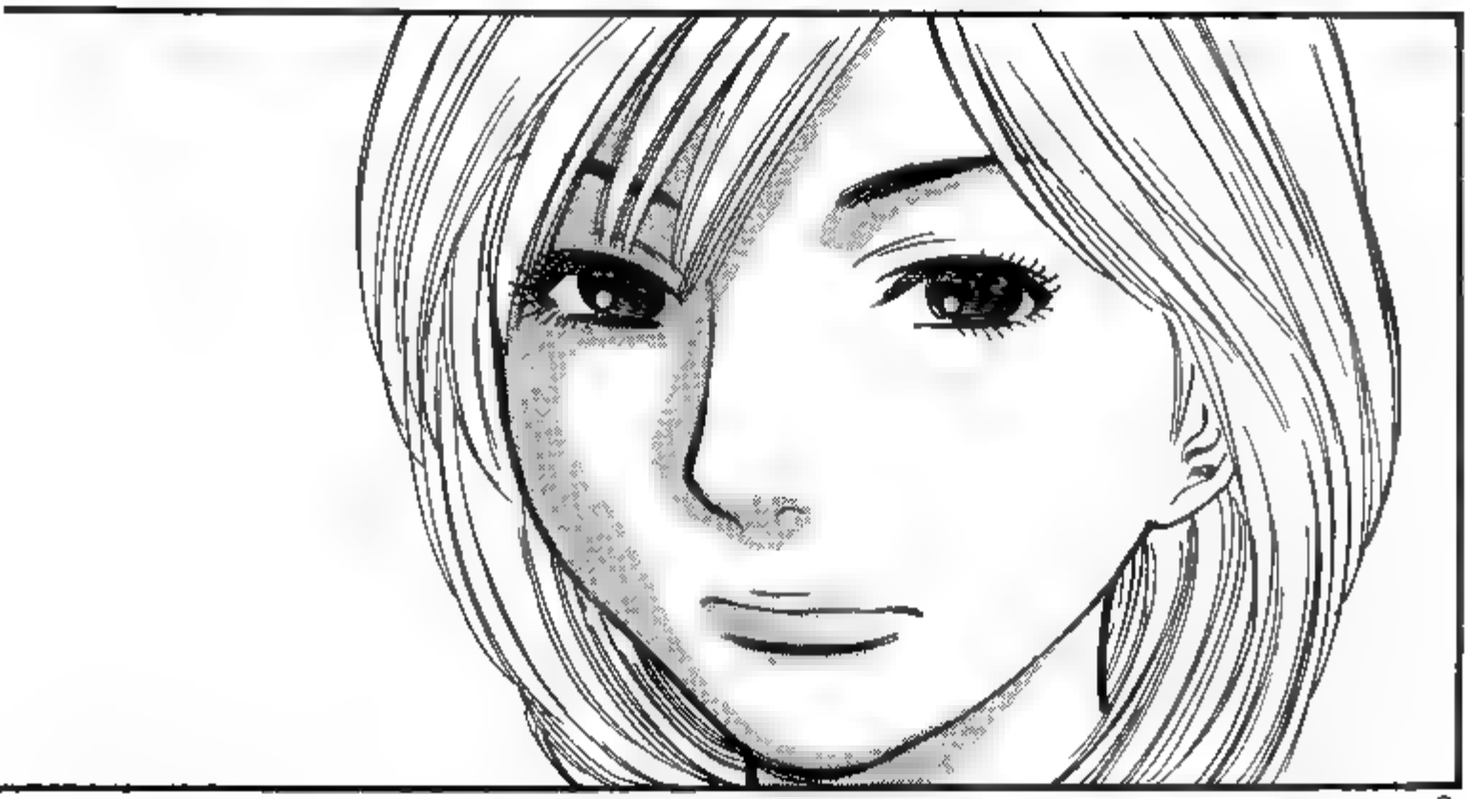
.....

I'M A NEWBIE IN THIS COMPANY, SO I'M GLAD TO HEAR AS MUCH AS I CAN ABOUT IT.

AND_

_REA- REALLY ...

IF I CAN HELP YOU DO THAT, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.
NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF PERSON YOU ARE, EVERYONE NEEDS TO COMPLAIN EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE TO BLOW OFF SOME STEAM...



AGAWA-KUN.
FEEL FREE O TURN TO ME NYTIME F YOU LIKE...
AND YOU ALWAYS LOOK IMPECCABLE, AT THAT.
I WAS REALLY IMPRESSED ABOUT THAT. KNOWING HOW HARD IT ACTUALLY IS, IS SOMETHING OF A RELIEF.
YOU'RE A HARD WORKER, ASOU-SAN. ANYONE CAN SEE THAT.

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT RIGHT NOW...

UH?

ABANDON THE ILLUSION THAT WORKING WOMEN ARE EXPECTING MEN TO TREAT THEM LIKE PORCELAIN DOLLS.

...ABOUT YOU HAVING SOMETHING FOR ME... IT'S A BIT ONE-SIDED, DON'T YOU THINK?

AS FOR THIS MORNING ...

WOMEN WHO FIND MORE INTEREST IN THEIR WORK THAN IN LOVE DO EXIST.

_IS LESS THAN A SNOWBALL'S CHANCES IN HELL.

I HAVE NO SUCH PLANS. THE LIKELINESS OF ANYTHING OF THE SORT HAPPENING BETWEEN US...

HOWEVER...

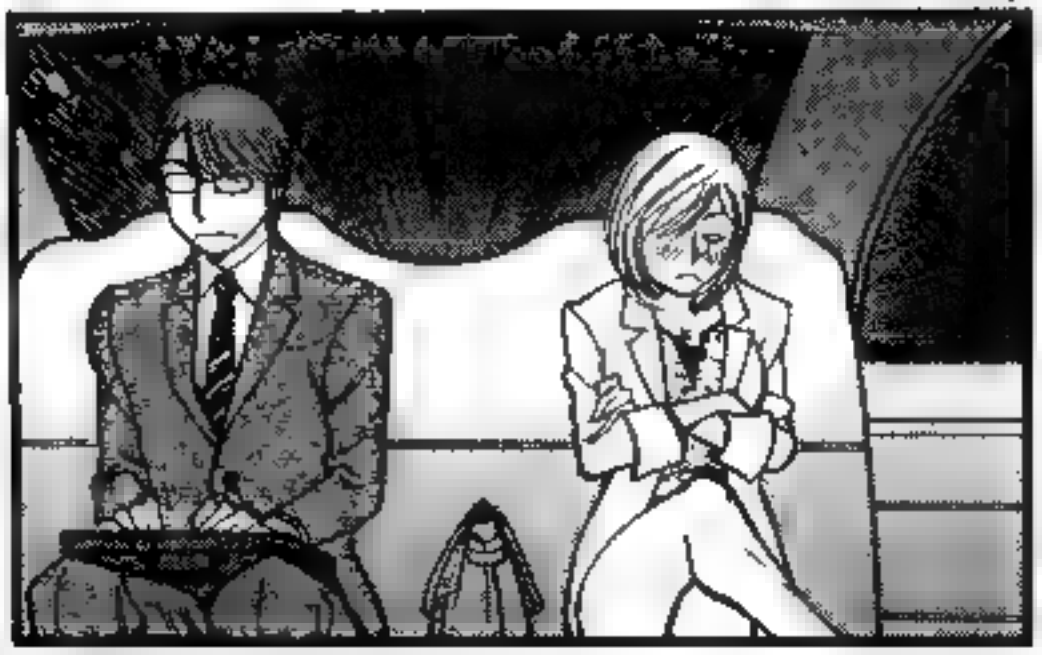
I DIDN'T MANAGE TO GET DRUNK AT ALL ...

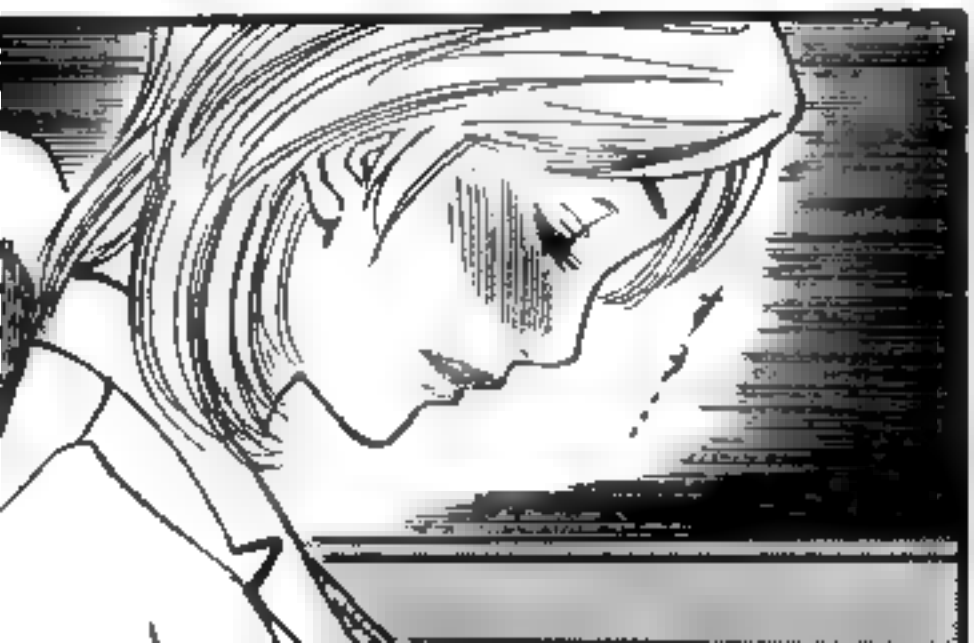
...SO I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO KEEP DRINKING...

BUT OUR MEAL WAS FAR FROM OVER

I WISHED I COULD HAVE CLEARED THE PLACE ASAP...

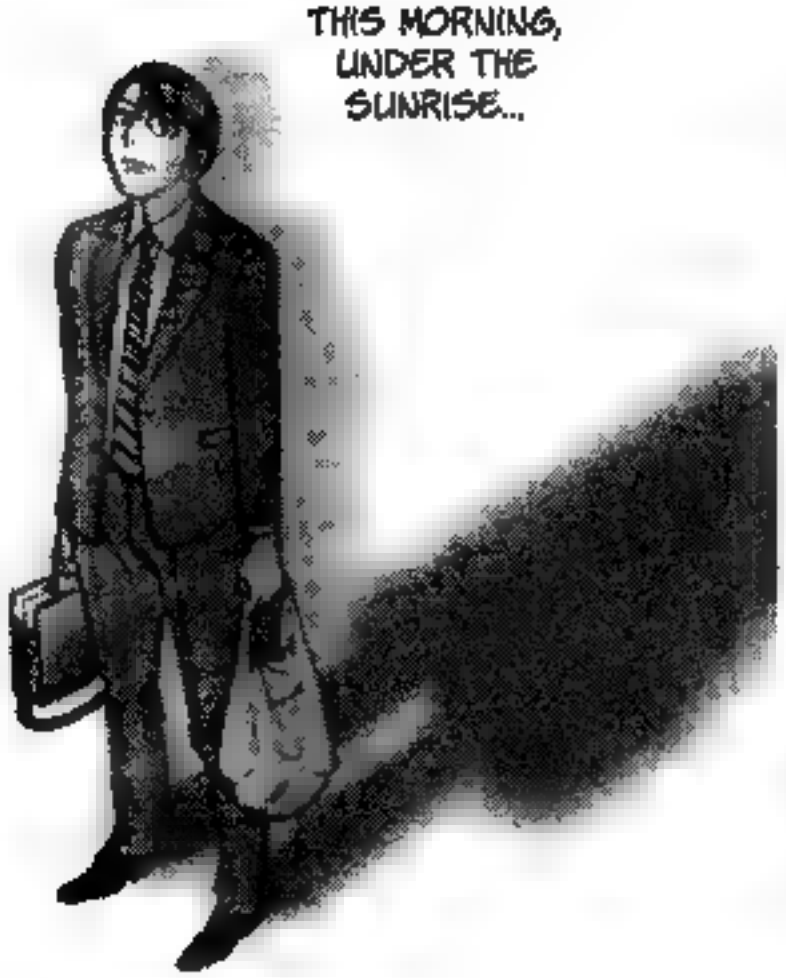
I... I WAS SO ASHAMED ...





...I WAS TOTALLY PUMPED UP, AS IF I'D BEEN REBORN...

THIS MORNING, UNDER THE SUNRISE...

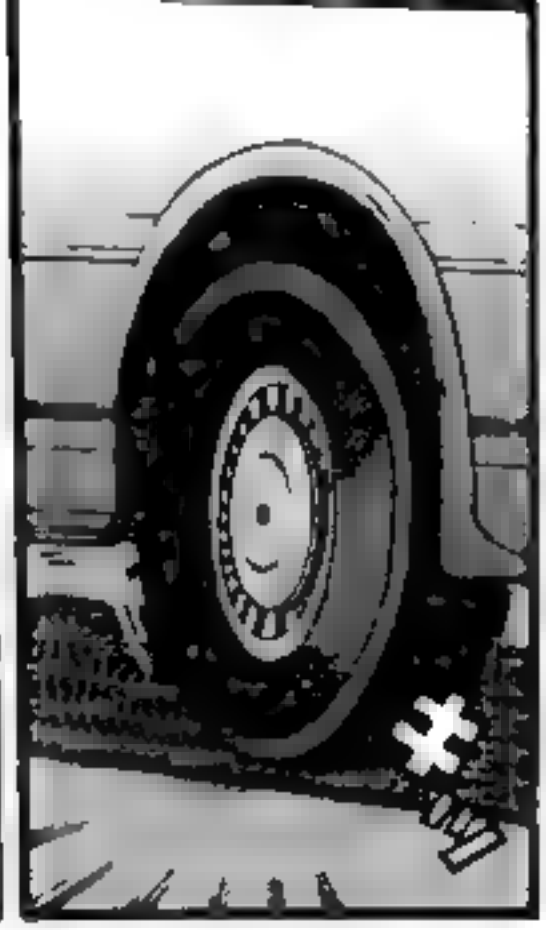


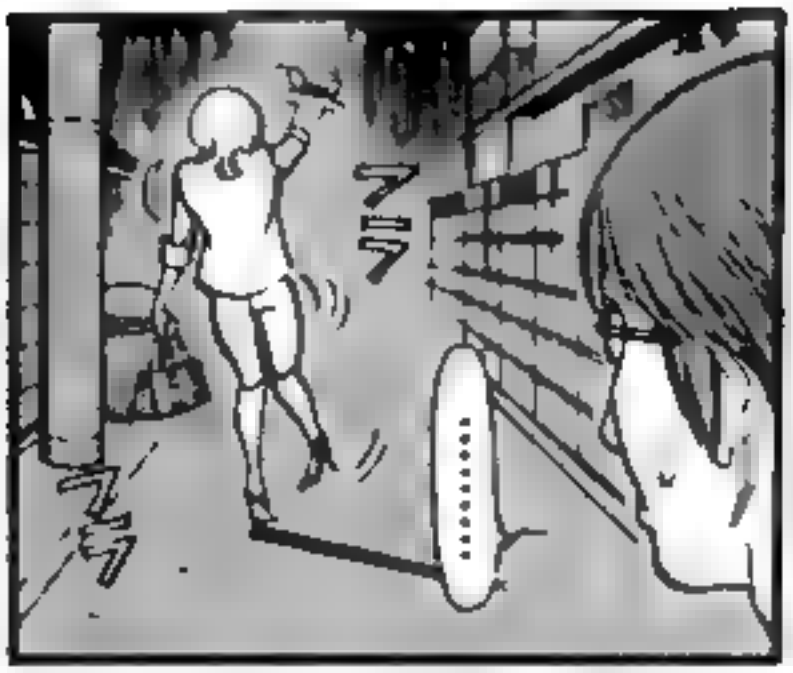
HM...

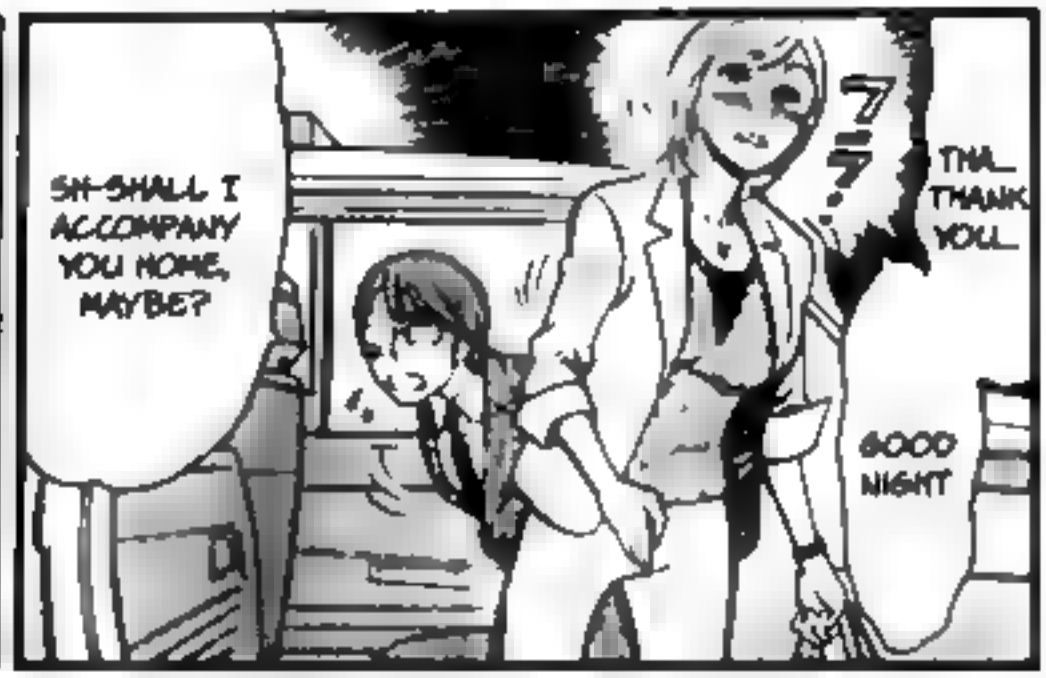
ASOU-SAN, THERE WE ARE.

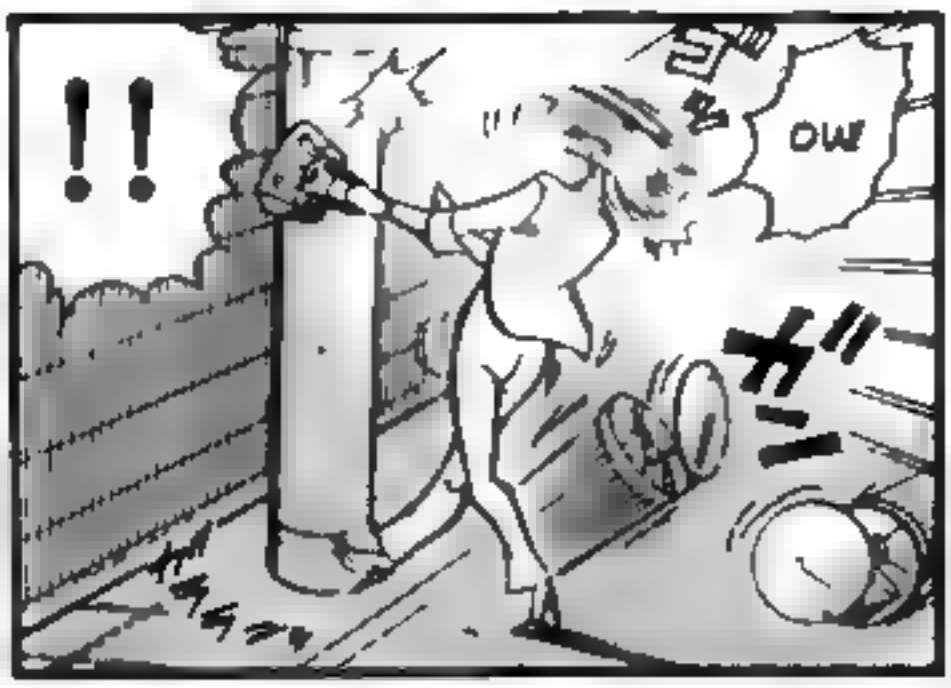
AH.

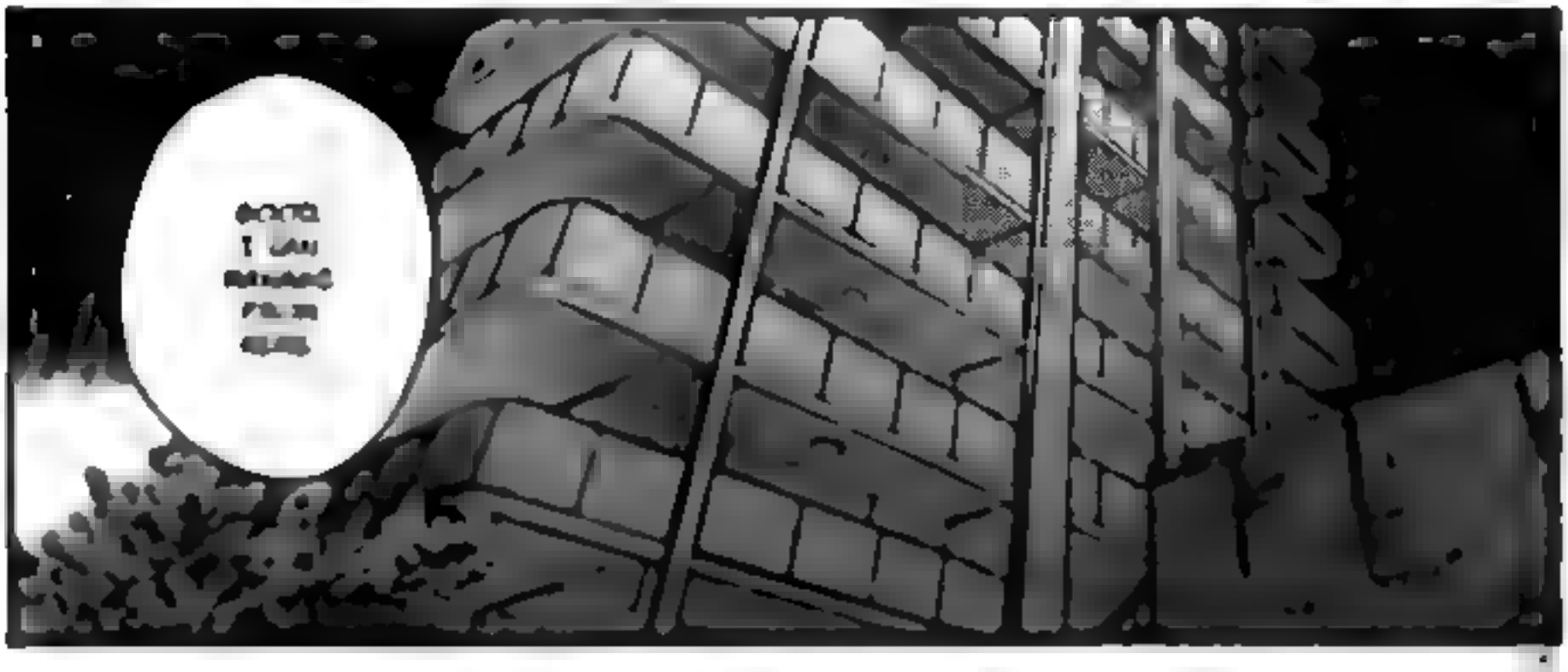
SIR. MADAM.

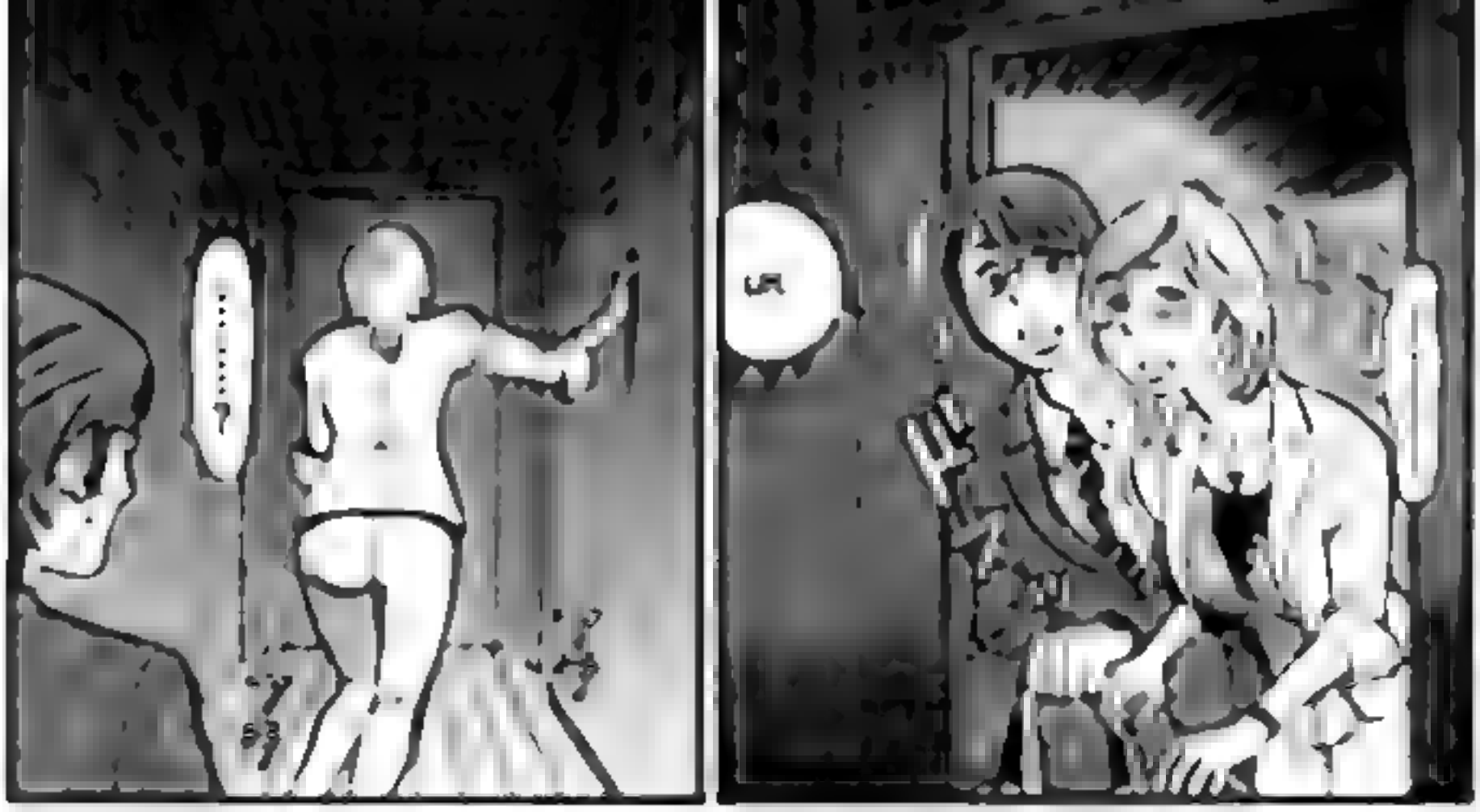




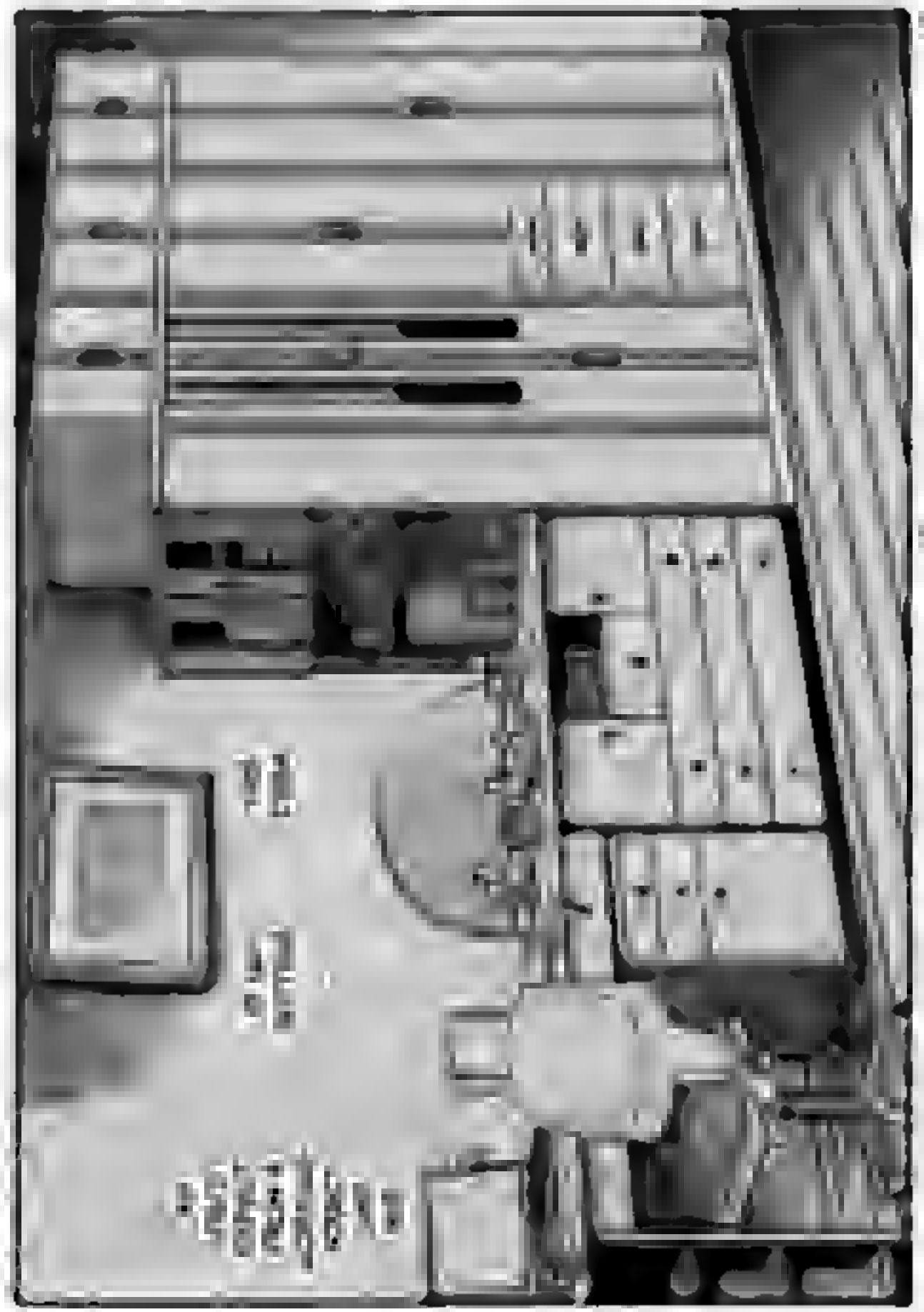







...

ABOU-
SAN?!



...AND AT THE OPPOSITE, IS THE BED... WITH A CRAPTON OF FANCY PLUSHES ON IT, AS IF IT BELONGED TO A LITTLE GIRL...

PFT...

...WHY SHE STRUGGLED SO HARD TO HIDE THIS FROM ME, EVEN THOUGH SHE COULD BARELY MOVE...

HENCE, ...

OW...

18

MOU- SAN...

HERE, HAVE SOME WATER.

DON'T LOOOOK.

DON'T LOOK AT MEEEEE.

AGAWA MUNENORI...

UUUUGH...

.....

PLAYING IT COOL, ARE WE..

.....

20

.....

ドコドコ

第14話：こういうのどう？

ﾊﾑ…
ﾊﾑ…

第14話：
こういうのどう？

CHAPTER 14:
HOW ABOUT THIS?

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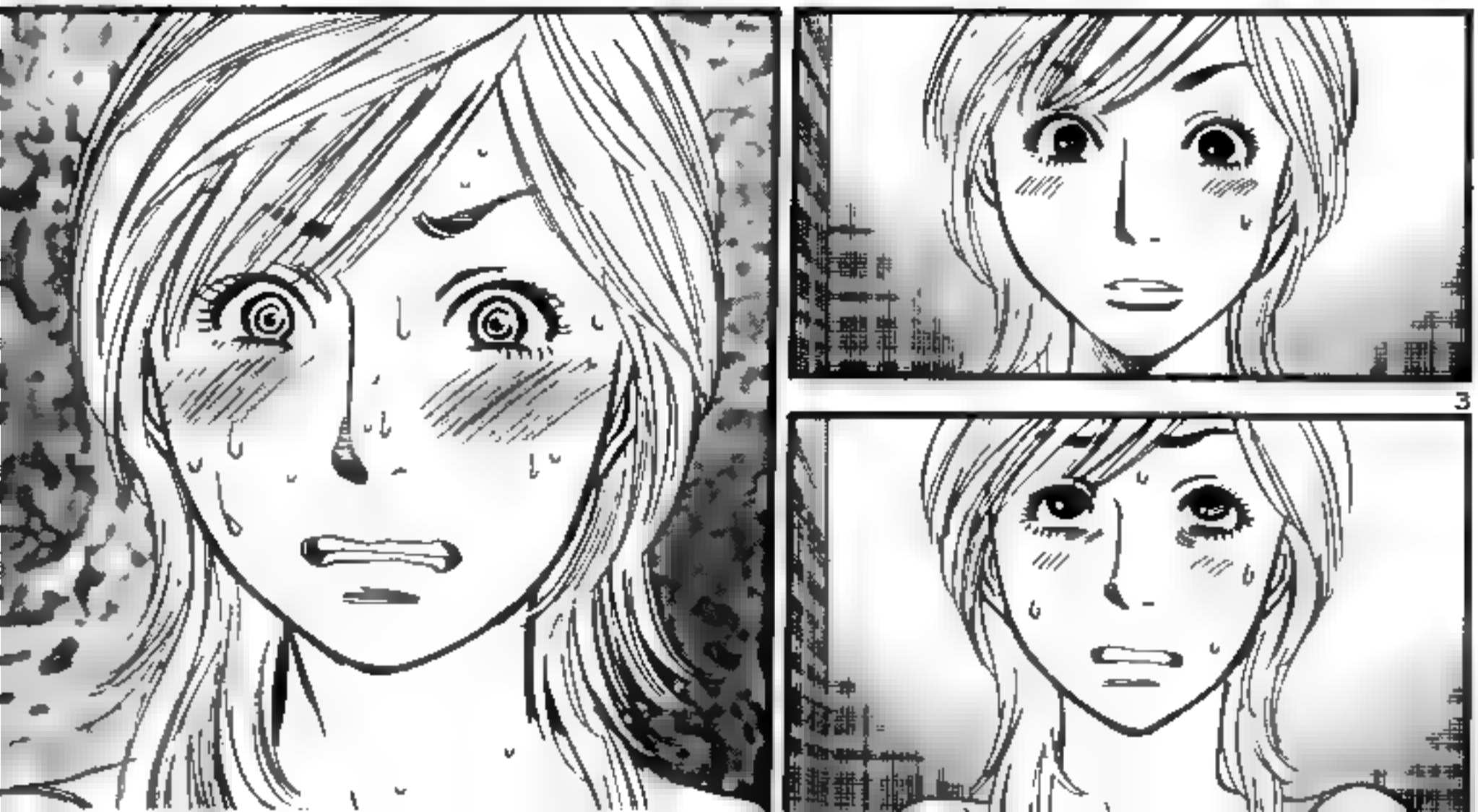
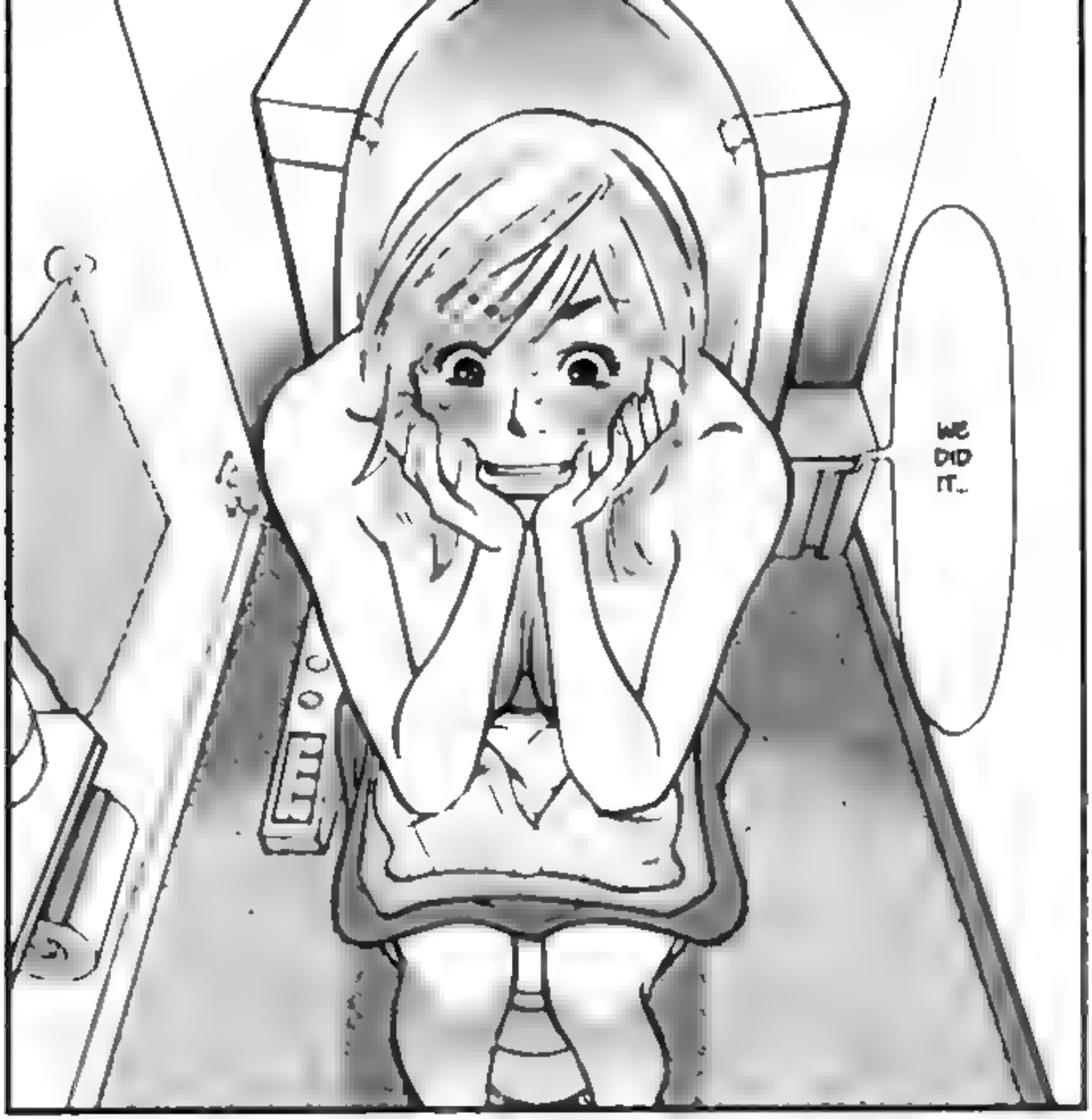



WEE

HM_

.....

AAAUUUSH!!

GO.

SNIP

GO_

OH SHIT!

GOTTA... GO...

OH SHIT!

RUN!.. RUNNING AWAY.

THEN WHAT ?

HAH

HAH

PHEW.

YOU'RE STILL HERE?

SHE'S BUILT UP HER FORTRESS AND GOT INTO REJECTION MODE_

EVEN HER MAKEUP IS IMPECCABLE

HMPH...

.....

...FOR BRINGING ME BACK HERE LAST NIGHT...

THANKS, ...

.....

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING TO STOP YOU.

WE-WELL ...

I'VE BEEN DRINKING A BIT TOO MUCH, IT SEEMS.

MISTAKE...

NEVER-MIND.

IT WAS A MISTAKE. THESE THINGS HAPPEN.

.....

...SO LET THAT BE A LESSON FOR THE TWO OF US.

WE'RE BOTH ADULTS ...

...UNORIGINAL AND PREFABRICATED.

COMING FROM YOU, ASOU-SAN, THIS IS FA-FAIRLY...

"INSTEAD OF THOSE BORING COOKIE-CUTTER LINES, LET ME HEAR WHAT YOU REALLY HAVE TO SAY."

THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD ME DURING THE OG-HOUMON.

YOU DON'T REMEMBER?

PRE-FABRI-CATED ?

PRE ...

I WANNA KNOW WHY YOU HATE ME, WHAT IT IS YOU HATE.

IF YOU HATE ME, COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY IT.

TELL ME WITH YOUR OWN WORDS, IN A WAY THAT I CAN UNDER-STAND.

.....

.....

I'D LIKE TO SAY MY PIECE FIRST, PLEASE!!

WAI-WAIT A MINUTE!

READY D YOU NIGHT, ETWEEN ND ME...

THE LIKELINESS OF ANYTHING OF THE SORT HAPPENING BETWEEN US IS LESS THAN A SNOWBALL'S CHANCES IN HELL..

NEVER.

H DO REMEMBER WHAT YOU TOLD ME.

IT'S NOT MY FAULT.

I CAN'T HELP BUT FEELING LIKE BEING KIND TO YOU

ABANDON THE ILLUSION THAT WORKING WOMEN ARE EXPECTING MEN TO TREAT THEM LIKE PORCELAIN DOLLS.

...I CAN UNDER-STAND THAT, BUT...

I ALSO RECALL TELLING YOU HOW ARBITRARY IT WAS.

I LOVE YOU.

ASOU-SAN...

UNTIL RECEN-TLY...

SFX: ESPRESSO MACHINE

I THOUGHT YOU HATED ME, AND AVOIDED ME WHENEVER YOU COULD?

PFT.

THAT WAS ONE ORIGINAL DECLARATION.

...BUT SUCH FEELINGS DOING A COMPLETE TURNAROUND AND BECOMING DESPERATE LOVE IS NOT UNHEARD OF.

I DID DISLIKE YOU AT SOME POINT...

BUT THERE YOU GO, STRAIGHT FORWARD AS THEY COME...

..TALKING EVEN AT THE RISK OF WOUNDING YOUR OWN PRIDE.

I FIGURED YOU WERE A TAD MORE OF AN EMOTIONLESS SORT.

YOU SURPRISE ME.

I ASSUME YOU JUDGED THAT NOW THAT WE'VE SLEPT ONCE, THE TIME HAS COME TO LAUNCH YOUR OFFENSIVE?

YOU...

...YOU DON'T MEANT YOU OPENED TO ME ONLY BECAUSE YOU WERE INTOXICATED, DO YOU?

...ARE YOU?

YOU AREN'T TELLING ME THAT YOU WOULD HAVE GONE WITH ANY MAN WHO HAPPENED TO BE AROUND...

THAT'S IT...

...AND SAY YOU KINDA FIT THE CUTENESS CRITERIA I'D LOOK FOR IN A MAN.

THE KIND THAT COULD MAKE A GOOD REPLACEMENT FOR MY PLUSHIES.

I'LL MAKE A WILD GUESS ...

HEHEH..

IS-

IS THAT YOUR BLOODY IDEA OF TRYING TO WOUND MY BLOODY PRIDE ?!

...I'M SURE I CAN MAKE YOU HAPPIER THAN THAT PANDA COLLECTION EVER COULD.

TO BE HONEST ...

...AREN'T ASKING ANYTHING OF ME...

THE STUFFED ANIMALS ...

.....

THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON TO ME IS MYSELF.

MY-MY WORK IS MY LOVE.

...A WOMAN... WHO MAKES A BIGGER PRIORITY OF HERSELF THAN OF MEN OR LOVE IS A WEIRDO.

...NOT ONCE. BUT THE WAY MEN SEE IT...

PERSONALLY, I DON' THINK I'VE EVER BEEN DISHONEST WITH ANY OF THE MEN I'VE BEEN INVOLVED WITH SO FAR...

PREPARING EXCUSES.

"I NEVER WANTED TO FALL IN LOVE AND HAVE AN AFFAIR IN THE FIRST PLACE."

LIKE, WHAT'S YOU'RE GONNA SAY WHEN WE BREAK UP

BUT YOU MUST BE THINKING ABOUT A MILLION DIFFERENT THINGS AT THE SAME TIME, RIGHT?

"IT'S REALLY GONNA SUCK IF THE MAN GETS CLINGY."

OR ELSE, ...

"WHAT IF THEY FIND OUT AT THE COMPANY? THAT CAN'T BE ANY GOOD."

YOUR OTHER WORRIES?

.....

YESTERDAY AGAIN, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS LIKE.

I WOULD KNOW.

CAUSE THAT'S KINDA MEAN, YOU KNOW.

ARE YOU GONNA PICK OVER EVERYTHING?

UM, ...

17

...WELL ...

.....

YESTERDAY?

.....

DID SOME-THING HAPPEN ?

YOU SAID SOMETHING ABOUT MEETING UP WITH THAT RUNAWAY GIRL, THE OTHER NIGHT

.....

.....

OBVI-OUSLY, —

...SOMETHING HAPPENED WITH THAT GIRL THAT TRANSLATED INTO A LACK OF SLEEP, ...

...AND FROM THERE, YOU JUST FELT LIKE SOCIALIZING?

AAAHH!

DAMN !

SILLY ME...

THIS IS ONE THING THAT WAS AWOL...

WELL, NO. THAT'S NOT WHAT I...

.....

...HOW ABOUT THIS?

SO, ...

HEY.

.....

19

.....!

I'LL GO OUT WITH YOU.

...OUR AFFAIR ONLY LASTS...

HOW-EVER ...

...AS LONG AS I SEE FIT.

第15話：ナマイキね。

CHAPTER 15:
SOME NERVE YOU GOT THERE

2

..THEN IT'S OVER.

IF I SAY IT'S OVER...

..IT LASTS..?

HOW LONG...

..AS IF IT NEVER HAPPENED.

WE FORGET WHATEVER THERE WAS IN THE MEAN-TIME.

NO MORE RUNNING AFTER ONE ANOTHER.

.....

IF YOU CAN STICK TO THAT,

..I MAY NOT MIND GOING OUT WITH YOU..

..WOULD YOU BE IN THE MOOD TO END IT RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW?

SHOULD I EVER AGREE TO THAT...

THAT WAS FAIRLY AMBIGUOUS, ASOU-SAN. THIS ISN'T LIKE YOU

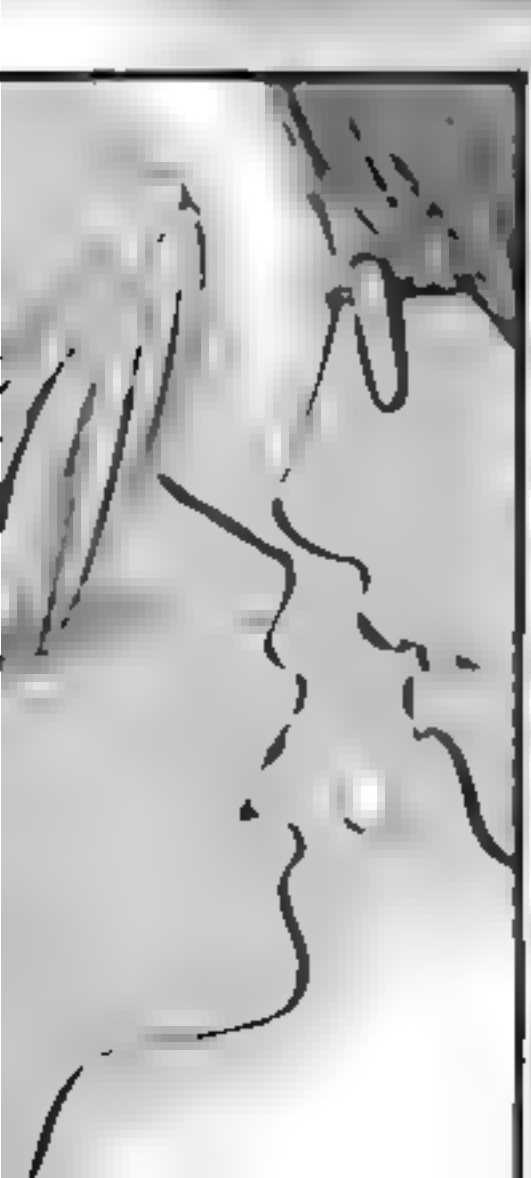
.....

IF THAT'S HOW IT IS, ...

..I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE SURE YOU'LL NEVER FORGET ME.

ALRIGHT

SOME NERVE, YOU GOT THERE.



YOU'VE GOT SOME LIPSTICK ON YOU.

AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE YOU HAD APPLYING THAT MAKEUP...

"!!"

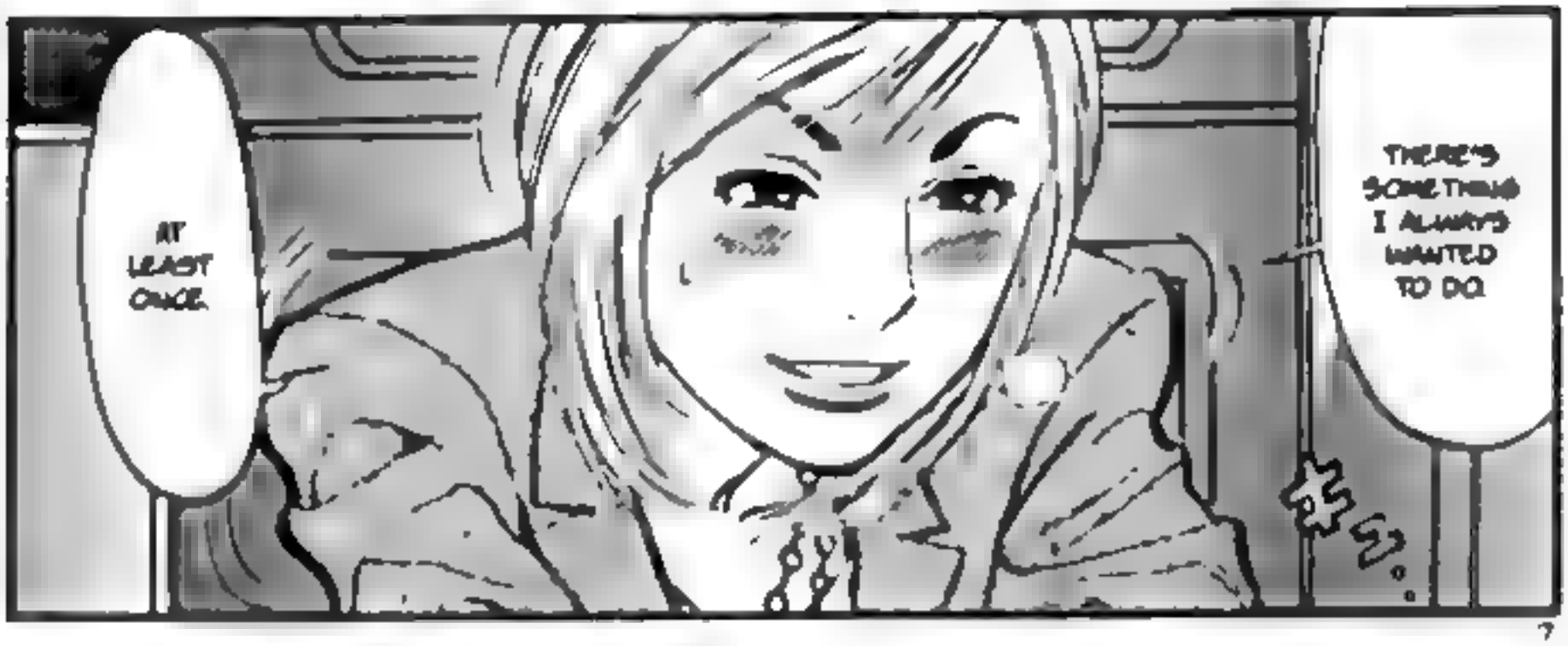
YOU MEAN, -

...YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WORK TODAY?

I GOT SO MANY LOA TO SPARE I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.

TN: LOA= LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

LOOK AT YOUR FACE!!
AHA
THAT WAS REAL
UGH
LET'S SEE YOU SHOW UP AT THE COMPANY, NOW.


AT LEAST ONCE
THERE'S SOMETHING I ALWAYS WANTED TO DO

OUCH!
WITH RECKLESS ABANDON!

RAN-MAKURAS A GUY...

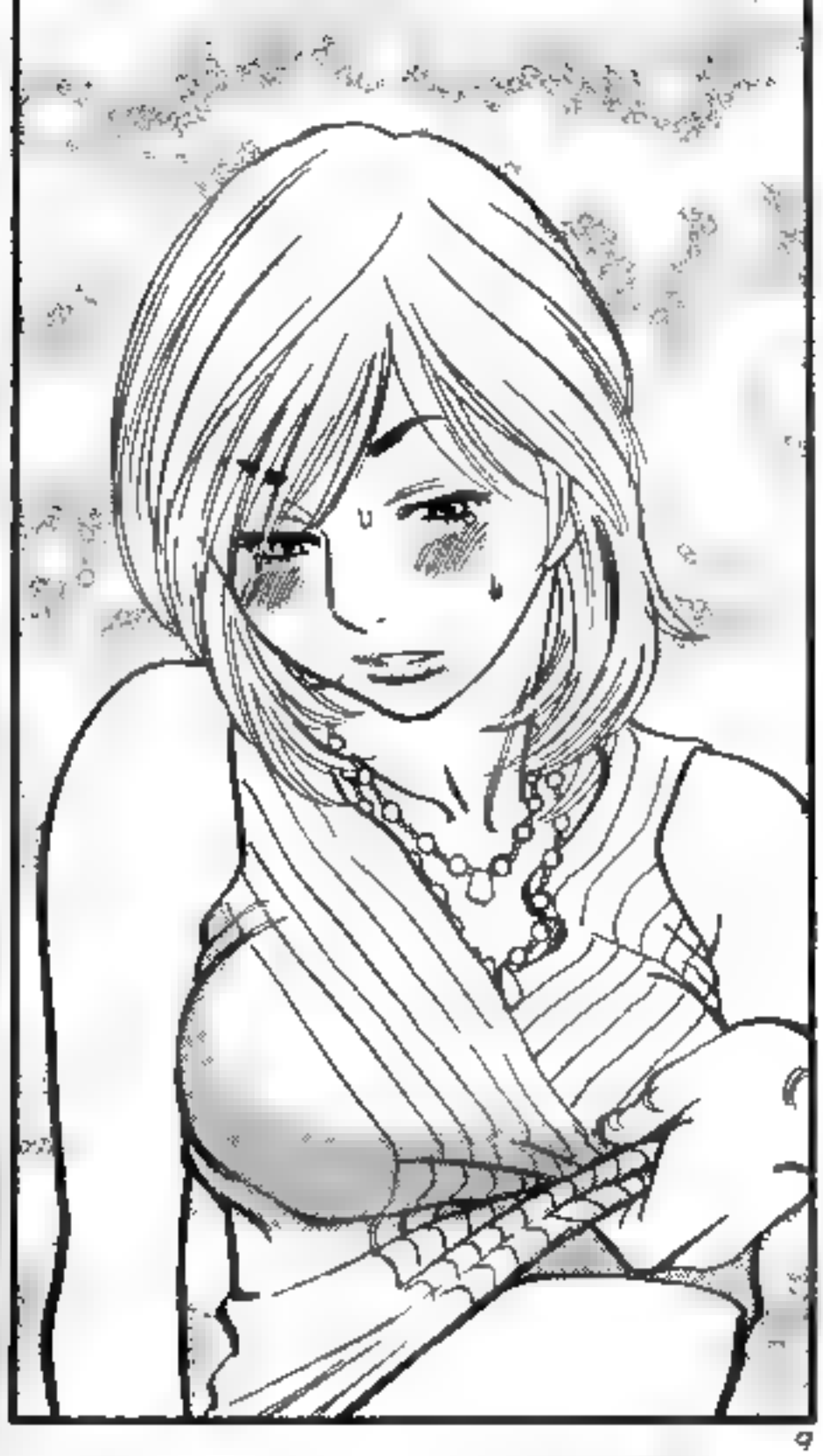
HUHU.

NASTY
...

B

.....

.....



LET ME TAKE IT ALL OFF

HEY

IT'S COU...

ドン

ドン

I'VE BEEN WANTING TO MANHANDLE YOU AT LEAST ONCE MYSELF, *ASOU-SAN.*

カオ

YOU LOOK REALLY CUTE FROM WHERE I'M STANDING.

HAH

HAH

MH!!

MH!!

MH...

MNH!

HAH

HAH

MH!

COME!

IT'S FINE!

I'M ABOUT TO..

ASOU-SAN.

I...

OH, CRAP...

WOW!

IF YOU COULD LET GO OF MY WAIST...

NO, ...

WAI...

COME WHEREVER YOU WANT !!

I DON'T GIVE A DAMN!

UUH?!

HAA

HAA

HAA

HAA

HAA
...

HAA

WAS IT A SAFE DAY?

TODAY
...

IT'S NOT LIKE I CHECK MY TEMPERATURE OR ANYTHING

NO IDEA

ABOUT HAMAYA-SAN?

UH?

I THINK I'VE CAUGHT A COLD, SO I WON'T BE COMING TODAY.

FOR SOMEONE SO IMPECCABLE USUALLY... SHE MIGHT BE MORE DEVIL-MAY-CARE THAN I EXPECTED.

ASOU, HERE.

YOU CUMMED THE EXACT SAME WAY YESTERDAY, SO DON'T CHICKEN OUT NOW!

HHCCCCCCC?

I JUST JUMPED INTO THAT PAGE FOR THE JOURNAL'S SPECIAL EDITION.

SORRY.

UH?

I'M GONNA LEAVE FOR THE OFFICE, SO YOU SHOULD GET GOING.

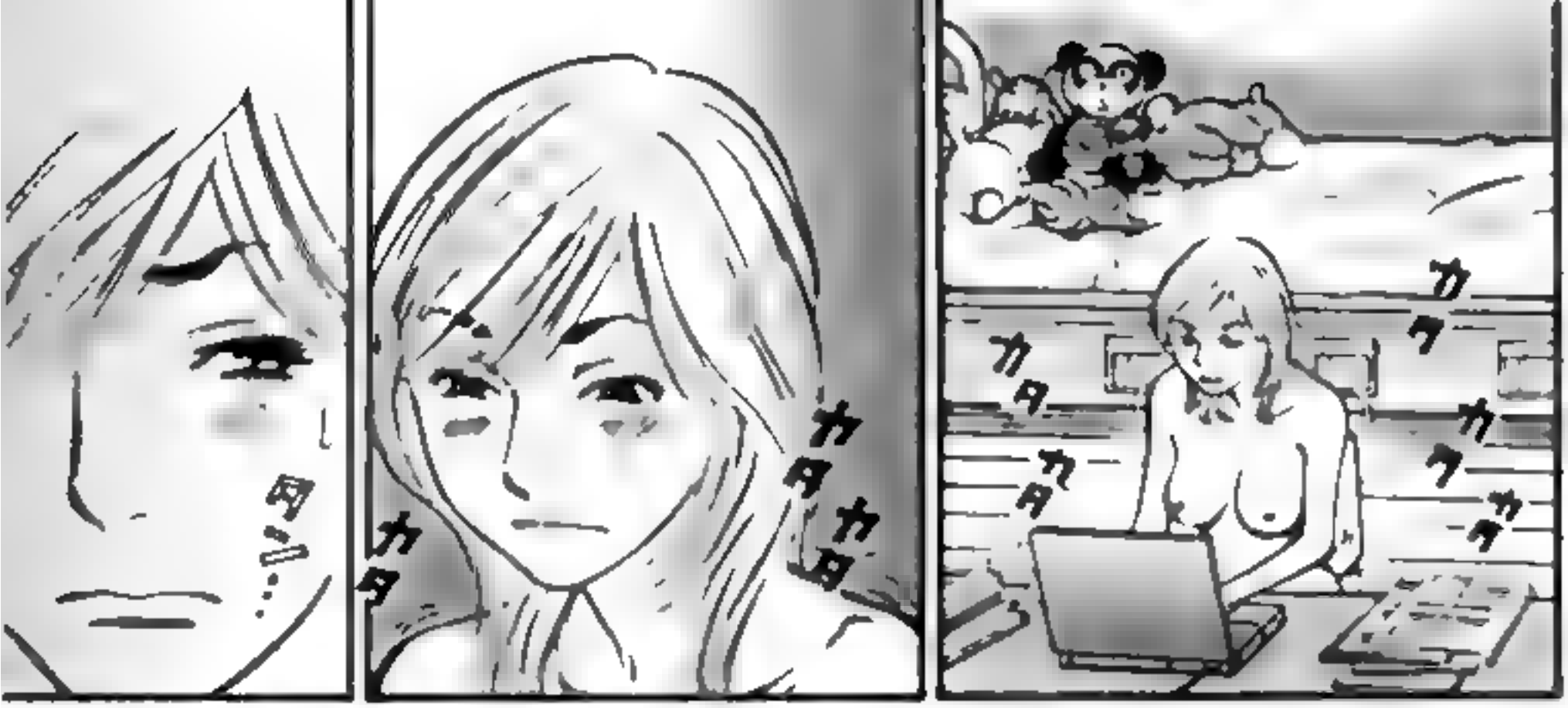
UH? NEVER MIND MY COLD!

I'LL PUT THE DATA [redacted] AND BRING IT TO THE OFFICE.

UNDER-STOOD!

UH-HUH.

YES.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カタ
カタカタ
カタカタ
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カタカタ

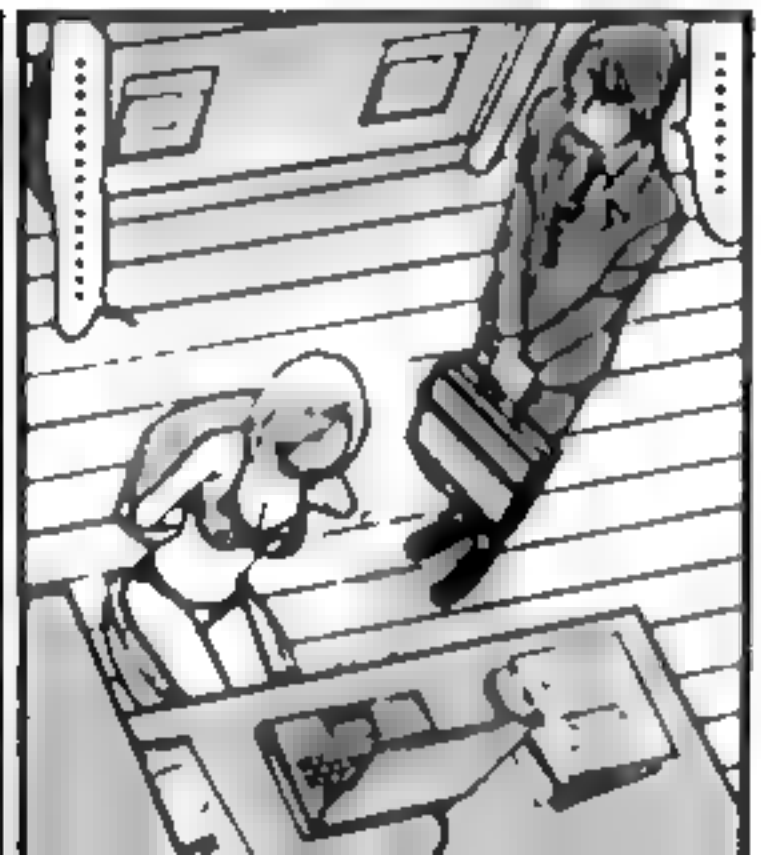
AND THE WAY YOU ARE NOW...
ER UM YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO LOCK THE DOOR AFTER ME...

UH?
STI-STILL THERE?

I'M NOT A KID
IT KNOW THAT

I'VE

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME
WELL, THEN


.....
.....

WE CAN HAVE DINNER AGAIN THIS EVENING.

I'LL CALL YOU LATER.

AGAWA-KUN.

GLADLY.

SURE.

...WITH-OUT EVEN TURN-ING ARO-UND.

SHE SPOKE WHILE KEEPING HER COOL...

IF THAT'S FINE WITH YOU, OF COURSE.

AND FAILING TO NOTICE HER TOMATO-RED FACE REFLECTED IN THE MIRROR NEARBY.

I WAS JUST HAVING A COFFEE_

HEY, AGAWA.

I ALREADY KNEW YOU HAD NO BUSINESS AMBITION.

I'VE BEEN IN THIS COMPANY FOR A GOOD FOUR YEARS.

DON'T YOU EXPECT YOU'LL GET TO STAND OUT BEFORE I DO.

LIKE I CARE.

...THIS SENPAI GUY HAD SWITCHED INTO POINTLESS LECTURING MODE ON ME.

YOU CAN'T EXPECT EVERYONE TO MAKE IT INTO PROJECTS OR PUBLICITY WITH FLYING COLORS.

...BUT THERE WAS THAT THING ABOUT A LATE REPORT A WEEK AGO, AND BEFORE I KNEW IT...

第16話: どうしてるのかな…

MEH.

UH.

AH.

第16話：
どうしてるのかな…

CHAPTER 16:
I WONDER HOW SHE'S DOING...

ASOU!

AH...

.....

4

UMEDZU-KUN.

BEING FROM THE SAME YEAR AS YOU, AND ALL, I MUST SAY I FEEL RATHER PROUD MYSELF...

YOUR FALL PROMOTION FOR "UN-TOUCHABLE" HAS BEEN YET ANOTHER SUCCESS, IT HAS!

MADE BUSINESS THAT MUCH EASIER. IT'S BEEN A GREAT HELP!

QUITE THE LET DOWN, IT WAS.

.....

EH?

HM?

UH?

REGARDING THAT WORK YOU SUBMITTED FOR THE IN-COMPANY PROJECT COMPETITION.

IF YOU WANNA MAKE IT INTO PUBLICITY, BE CAREFUL NEXT TIME.

BUT PROJECTS THAT LOOK LIKE MIKADOU RIP-OFFS ARE THE SORT OF THING SHIMATANI-BUCHOU HATES WITH A PASSION.

APPAR-ENTLY NOT.

WELL, I WASN'T PRECISELY AT MY BEST WHEN I PRODUCED THAT.

SFX: CLICK CLICK CLICK.

カチ カチ カチ カチ カチ カチ

UMEDZU-SAN'S FACE AFTER THAT WAS JUST PRICELESS.

HE WAS BLUSHING LIKE MAD, AND HE KEPT SILENT THE WHOLE TIME.

I ALMOST FELT SORRY FOR THE GUY

カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ

THAT WAS TRUE.

I REMEMBER IT FROM BEING FROM THE SAME YEAR AS HIM.

THAT PROJECT OF HIS WAS UTTER CRAP

カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ カタ

6

IT'S YOUR FAULT FOR BEING SO EASY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF, DON'T YOU THINK?

CLICK

SCARY ...

SO YOU DID PROTECT ME...

HUH. THAT'S UNUSUAL.

I DON'T HAVE TO WORK ON MY DAY OFF, TOMORROW.

I THOUGHT MAYBE I SHOULD GET BACK TO MY PLACE A BIT...

UM.

I'M GONNA NEED TO RENEW MY LEASE SOMETIME SOON, NOW...

DO YOU HAVE ANY PRO-JECTS?

!

FOR ALL THE GOOD IT DOES YOU

YOU DON'T HAVE TO RENEW THAT LEASE, DO YOU?

TN: COFFEE MACHINE SOUNDS.

THAT'S THE POINT SHE'S MAKING, ESSENTIALLY...

.....

ゴトトト

"THE TWO OF US CAN JUST LIVE HERE."

IT STARTED THE WAY IT STARTED.

WE'VE BEEN DATING FOR ABOUT A COUPLE OF MONTHS...

AS FOR MY PERSONAL BELONGINGS, I'VE BEEN ACCUMULATING QUITE A FEW OF THEM IN HERE.

BUT I'VE BEEN ROUTINELY COMING TO STAY HERE AFTER WORK.

SHAM-POO?

CAN I LEAVE MY OWN SHAMPOO HERE NEXT TIME?

WHAT ?

AH YEAH.

DID YOU CHANGE YOUR SHAMPOO?

ASAWA-SAN.

A GIRL FROM THE BA TOLD ME...

EEEERM. HOW DO YOU KNOW?

YOU'VE BEEN USING VIDAL SALOON, HAVEN'T YOU?

SNIFF SNIFF

UH?

LaVie

DUH?!

UNEASY

BECAUSE I USE VIDAL SALOON MYSELF.

EH?

HOW COME?

KAGO, WAS IT?

ドッキ

!!

...DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE LIVING WITH A GIRL.

COME ON, ...

A GIRL WOULD NEVER BOTHER WITH WHAT KIND OF SHAMPOO A GUY SHE HATES USES.

IDIOT

WUT?

UH?

SHE'S ALWAYS MAKING FUN OF ME, YOU KNOW?

SHE'S GOT A THING FOR YOU.

BOOBIES ARE PRECISELY WHY I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU, ASOU-SAN, RIGHT?

HAPPY?

MISS BOOBIES HAS A SOFT SPOT FOR YOU, AGAWA-KUN.

...ABOUT HAVING AN ATTRACTIVE BOYFRIEND,

NO GIRL IS GOING TO COM-PLAIN...

AHH.

HAHL

WE'RE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF MY DANGER ZONE.

CAREFUL TODAY.

I THINK ...

HA_

AHL_

I'VE JUST REMEMBERED A LITTLE TRICK

JUST LIKE THAT!!

YEAH

THAT'S IT!

MH!

MH!

MH!

HAH

HAH

HAH

HAH

SFX CREAK CREAK

NOT YET...

JUST A LITTLE BIT...

COME ON...

SFX. CRACK.

.....

THAT CRACKING NOISE...

...IT CAME FROM THE BED...

WHA... WHAT ?!

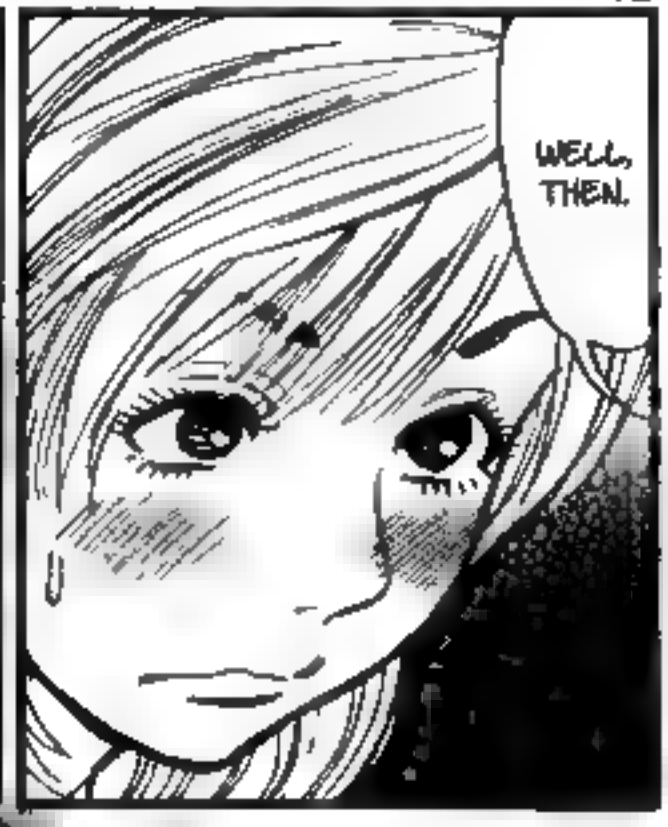
14

...IS BROKEN...

THE PLYWOOD ...

A-AND IT WAS A CHEAP ONE IN THE FIRST PLACE!!
I-I'VE HAD THAT BED EVER SINCE I WAS A SCHOOLGIRL!

_WE GO BUY ANOTHER ONE TOMOR-ROW?
HOW ABOUT -


WELL, THEN.

HAHA.

TODAY'S SATURDAY! I DON'T WORK ON SATURDAY, SO NO PROBLEM.

AREN'T WE GETTING A BIT TOO CLOSE TO THE COMPANY ?

HUMM.

COME ON, THIS ONE IS SO SOFT.

UUH?

THE PREVIOUS ONES WERE EXPENSIVE INDEED... BUT I LIKED THEM BETTER.

AND CHEAP, TOO.

I REALLY LIKE IT.

THIS ONE LOOKS REALLY SNUG AND COMFORTABLE.

WE COULD DO WITH A SOLID ONE THIS TIME.

ONE BED, ANOTHER BED, SAME DIFFERENCE, NO?

WE- WELL NO, THAT'S NOT...

TIRED OF WALKING ALREADY, ARE YOU?

♪

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR VERY KIND OFFER...

YOU CAN STAY HERE AND HAVE A SMOKE.

I THINK I'LL GO HAVE A LOOK AT THE PREVIOUS STORE.

I'VE BEEN ABLE TO SEE GOD ONLY KNOWS HOW MANY ASPECTS OF HER I NEVER SUSP-ECTED

EVER SINCE I STARTED DATING HER...

AND GOD ONLY KNOWS HOW MUCH MORE I'M GONNA FIND OUT ABOUT, PROBABLY

SHOULD MAKE ME A HAPPY MAN

SO MOVING IN WITH HER

I WANNA GET TO KNOW A LOT MORE OF HER...

...HAS MADE ME HAPPY.

YEAH, FALLING IN LOVE ...

IT'S ALL THANKS TO THAT GIRL FOR BEEFING ME UP GIVING ME THE COURAGE TO MAKE MY CONFESSION

I WONDER HOW SHE'S DOING AT THE MOMENT

リールキューピッド便

#1

リールキューピッド便

RENA...

ブオオオオ

クールキュピッピ

110円

ガ

ブオオオ

！！

ガアア！

第17話：
気のせいだったんだよ…

……!!

CHAPTER 17:
MUST'VE BEEN
MY IMAGINATION...

第17話：

気のせい だったんだよ…

SHE'S TURNED A WHOLE LOT YOUNGER...

IF THAT'S REAL...

HM...

I'M PRETTY SURE SHE DON'T QUITE LOOK LIKE SOMEONE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL...

NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT...

HM?

—PROGRESSIVE AGING REGRESSION SYNDROME—

...I'LL END UP REVERTING INTO AN EVEN YOUNGER CHILD!

"IF YOU DON'T KISS ME ...

NO WAY! NO WAY!!

THAT WAS TRUE?!

AND RENA HAS BEEN CALLING FOR HELP THE WHOLE TIME!

CS ENZYME. THAT SORT OF DISEASE ACTUALLY EXISTS?

OR HER LITTLE SISTER ?!

IS THAT SOMEONE ELSE WHO HAPPENS TO LOOK LIKE HER ?!

IT CAN'T BE!!

IT CAN'T BE!!

NO WAY!!

!!

AGAWA-KUN!

THERE WAS ANOTHER SHOP RIGHT NEXT TO THE LAST ONE.

I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU!

SOME-THING WRONG ?

UH... SURE...

THERE'S A BED I LIKE THERE.

FOLLOW ME.

6

THERE. THE BAGS.

AH-HAH.

WE_ WELL.

SHE'S GONE —

ブオオオ

WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO DISPOSE OF THE OLD BED BEFORE THEY DELIVER THE NEW ONE.

IF THEY WORK ON WEEKDAYS ONLY, WHAT AM I GONNA DO ABOUT THE OFFICE?

DO THEY DO THAT ON WEEKENDS?

LARGE AS IT IS, I MIGHT HAVE TO GIVE THE MUNICIPALITY A CALL SO THEY CAN RETRIEVE IT.

SU-SURE.

ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?

.....

YEAH, ... PROB-ABLY.

...WHY, YES. THAT SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT

CERTAINLY IF I CONTACT THEM AND LEAVE IT IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING THEY CAN PICK IT UP THERE?

AH, UH...

ABOUT THE LEASE ON YOUR APARTMENT.

EH?

WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT LAST NIGHT?

WE COULD LIVE TOGETHER IF YOU LIKE.

YOU COULD MOVE IN WITH ME, AGAWA-KUN.

IF I SLEEP AT HER PLACE TONIGHT, THAT'LL BE ONE FULL WEEK OF ME CONTINUOUSLY STAYING THERE...

.....

THEN WE GO BACK TO HER PLACE.

..AND, WE HAVE DINNER THERE.

ON THE WAY BACK FROM WORK WE MEET UP SOMEPLACE FAR FROM THE OFFICE.

..WE JUST KILL TIME, DOING WHATEVER EITHER OF US LIKES BEST.

IF WE GET SICK OF EACH OTHER'S CONSTANT PRESENCE...

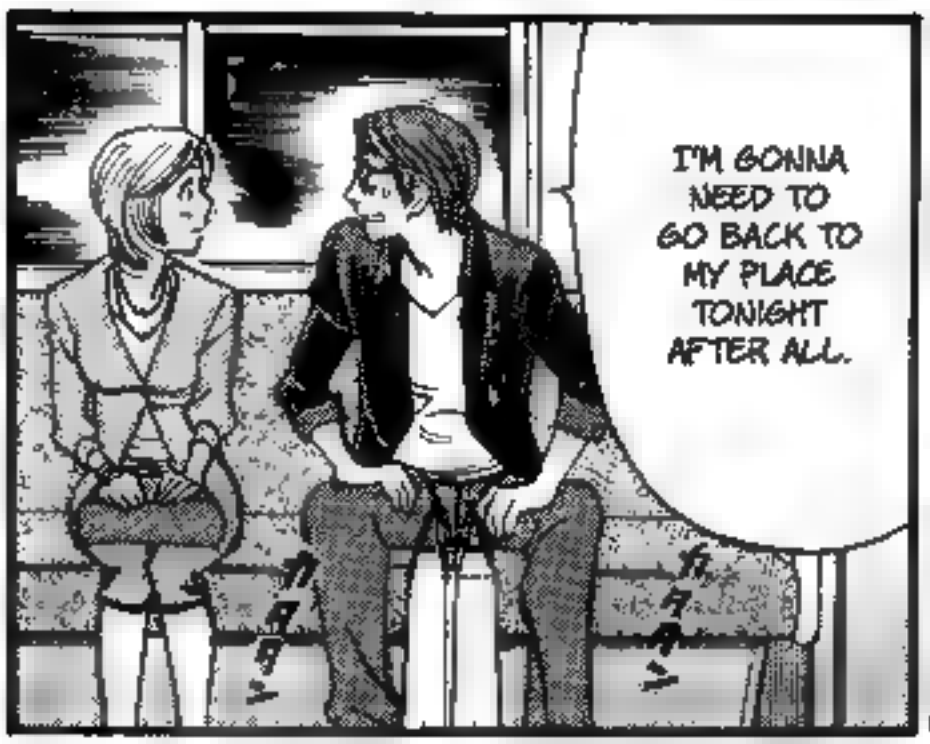
I'LL BE GLAD TO.

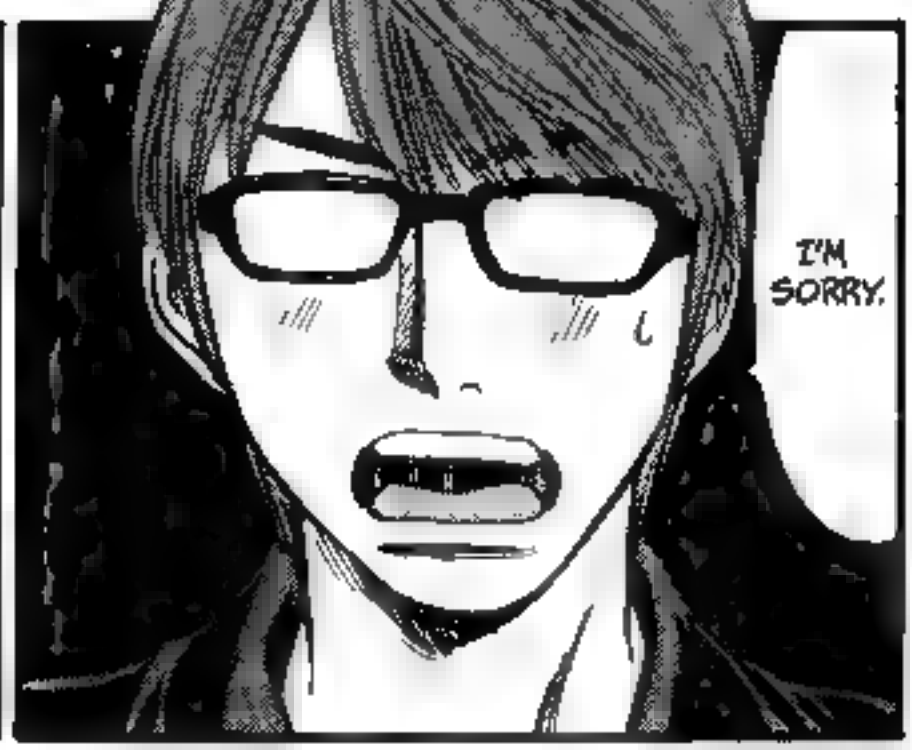
IF IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU, ASOU-SAN...

I GUESS THERE'S NO MISTAKE, THERE.

WE DO WELL TOGETHER.

JR


I'M GONNA NEED TO GO BACK TO MY PLACE TONIGHT AFTER ALL.


I'M SORRY.

I'VE JUST REMEMBERED THOSE DVDS I'D BORROWED.

I FORGOT I'D BEEN STAYING AT YOUR PLACE NON-STOP FOR A WEEK...
THAT CAME RIGHT OUT OF NO-WHERE.

BUT PAYING EXTRA FOR A LATE RETURN WOULD SUCK.
I-I HAVEN'T WATCHED THEM YET, OF COURSE.
DVDS?

SO I'M ALREADY LATE, YOU SEE...

A-ACTUALLY, I RENTED THEM ON FRIDAY, WHEN I GOT BACK HOME.

DIDN'T YOU SPEND THE WHOLE WEEK AT MY PLACE, STARTING LAST SATURDAY?

HU...
HUMPH.
SO YOU WATCH THAT SORT OF THING TOO.

SORRY ABOUT THAT.

I... I HAD TO GO TO SLEEP ON MY OWN, AND I FELT KINDA LONELY.

...NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE.

SORRY ...

SO...

SEEING AS YOU'LL BE LEAVING *ME* ALL ALONE TONIGHT.

AFTER ALL, THERE WON'T BE MUCH SLEEPING ALONE TO BE DONE IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

FINE.

I THINK I CAN LET YOU GO EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.

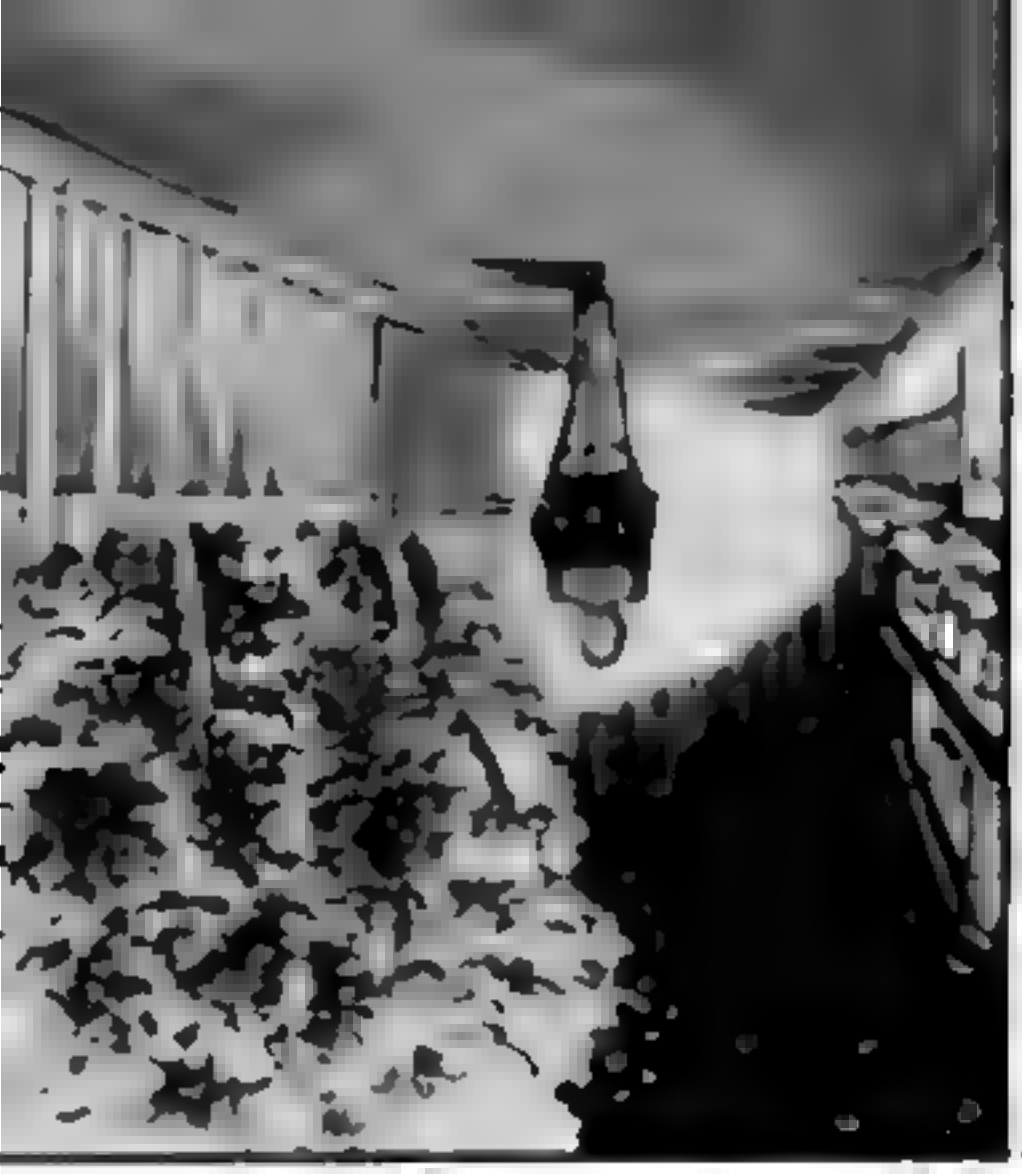
PFT

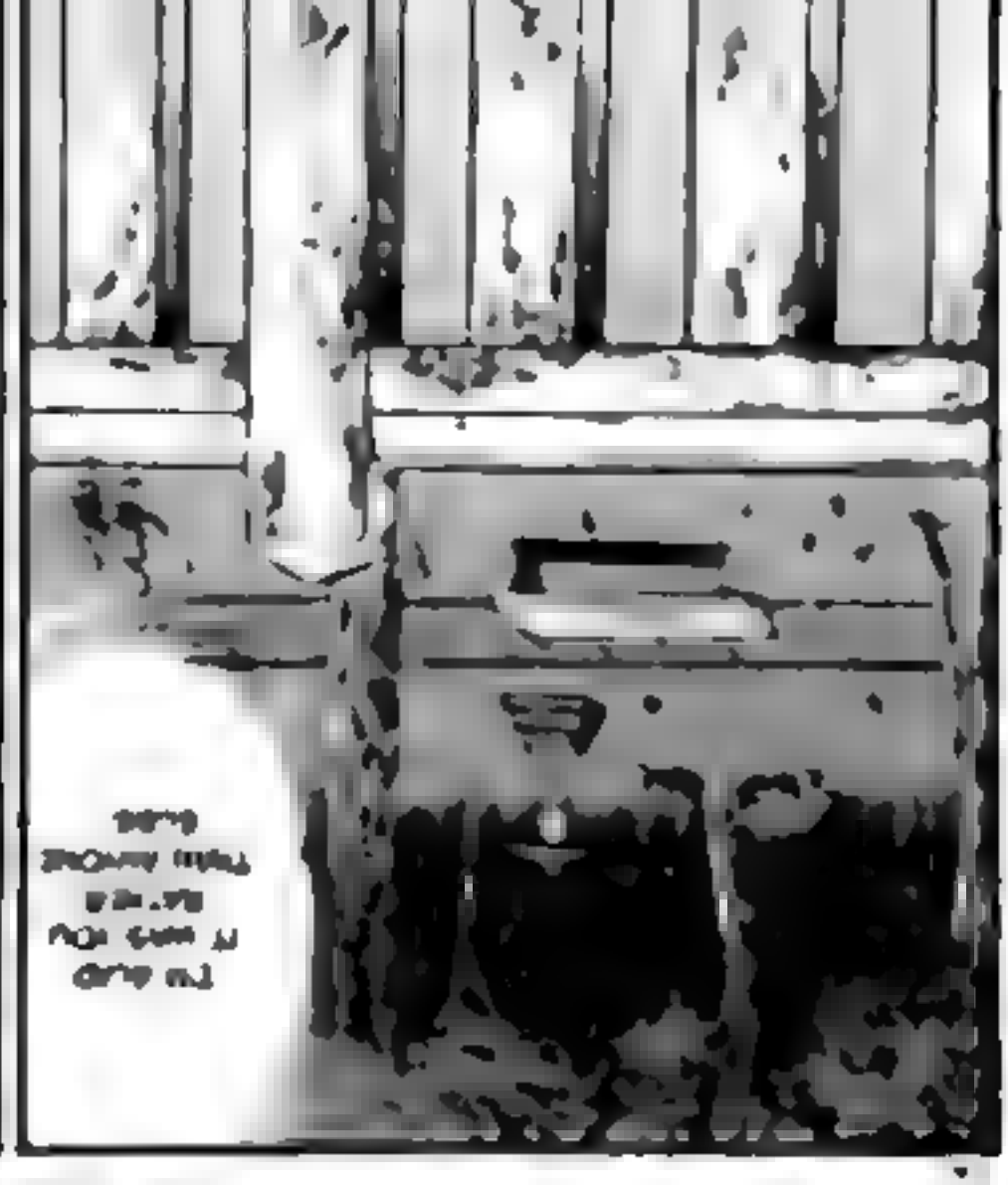
RIGHT.

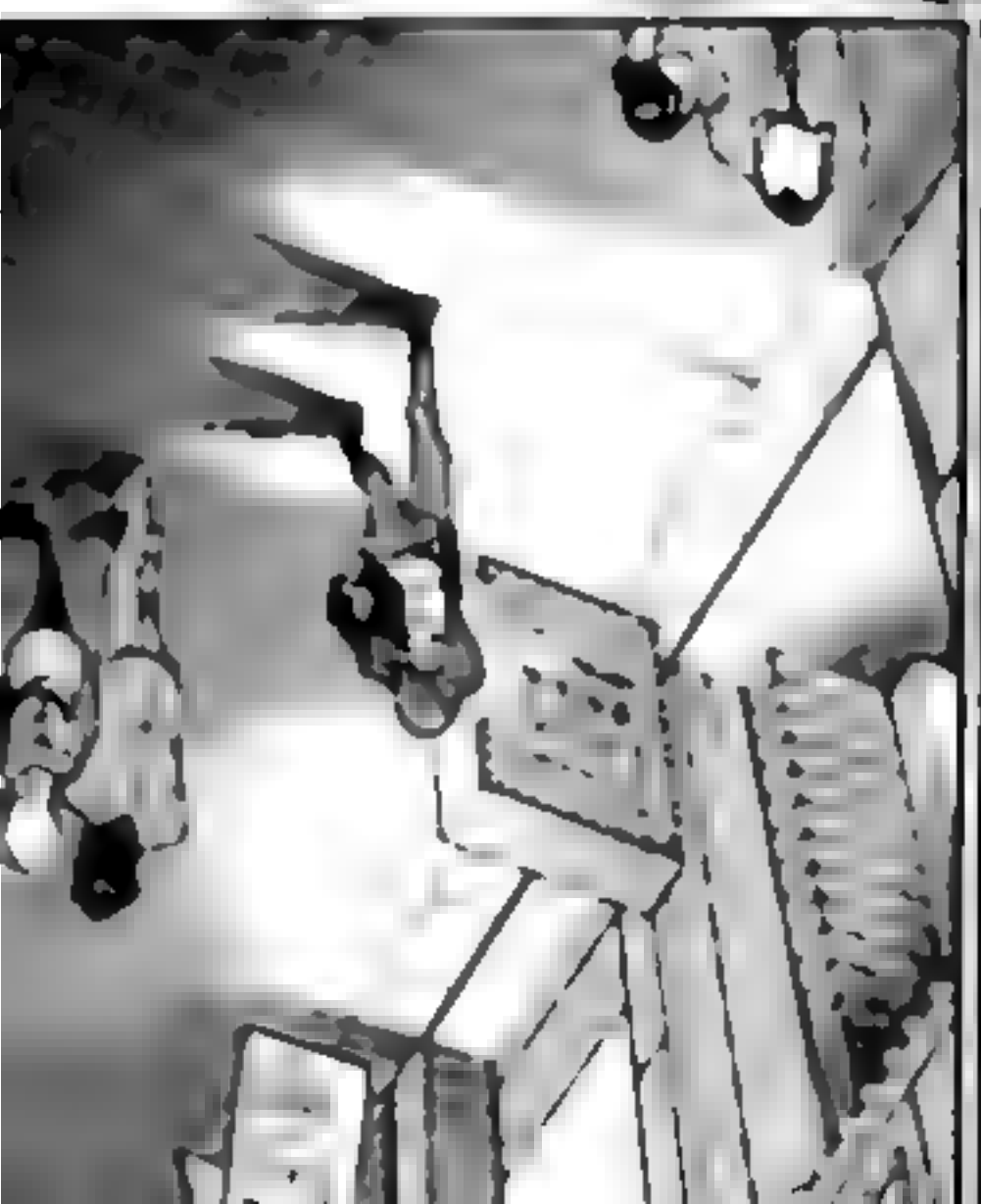
I'LL CALL TOMORROW.

WELL, SEE YOU ON MONDAY AT THE OFFICE THEN.

12







Apocalypse

THANK YOU.

RENA!

RENA!!

KISS ME.

RENA!!

ABOVE ALL, WHY AM I WORRYING SO MUCH ABOUT HER?

I'M OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW BETTER BY NOW.

GETTING BACK AT MY PLACE AFTER ONE WEEK AND DO WHATEVER CAN'T HURT EITHER...

OH, WELL ...

THERE'S A CREEPY OLD GUY OUT THERE WHO'S BEEN MORE THAN A LITTLE INSISTENT WITH THE LADIES, OF LATE. THAT INCLUDES GRADE SCHOOL GIRLS TOO.

WAIT! NOT SO FAST!! WHO ARE YOU CALLING A GRADE SCHOOL GIRL?!!

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

AROUND HERE? REALLY?

SFX WOOF WOOF

I'M 19,
I AM!"
AND I'M
CERTAINLY
NO CHILD
!!

...REALLY?

SFX: WOOF WOOF

CHAPTER 18:
I'LL JUST DISAPPEAR

第18話：
消えちゃったりして。

RENA!!

2

YOU CAN'T —

IT'S RENA!!

WHAT ARE YOU.

!?

.....

...AND RENA IN HIRAGANA OR KATAKANA.

THE FIRMAMENT'S SEA, ...

AMAMI RENA.

AND HOW WOULD YOU WRITE THAT?

...WHAT'S YOUR NAME ANYWAY?

GACKT

NOT YOUR CELL PHONE OR ANYTHING. I JUST WANNA CALL YOUR MOM OR YOUR DAD.

UH, ...

YOUR CONTACT ADDRESS, NOW. ANY PHONE NUMBER?

.....

LOOKS LIKE SHE'S SECOND-GUESSING THAT ONE, CONSIDERING HOW WELL IT WENT WITH ME.

GOOD. GOOD.

STUPID! DON'T SAY THAT! YOU'LL JUST DRAW UNDUE SUSPICION TO YOURSELF IF YOU PULL THAT OUT!

LIKE, YOU'RE A THIEF OR SOMETHING.

I EVEN HAVE MY STUDENT CARD WITH ME!

NAH, WITHOUT ANY PAPERS TO PRODUCE, THAT'LL LOOK LIKE A LIE...

WHICH IT IS.

SHOULD I POSE AS HER BROTHER?

EVEN IF I CLAIM I KNOW HER, I MIGHT JUST END UP LOOKING LIKE A SCHOOLGIRL KIDNAPPER...

WAIT A MINUTE? DOESN'T MY COMING OUT HERE MAKE THINGS THAT MUCH MORE COMPLICATED?

!!

AGAWA-SAN!

!

.....

WHO ARE YOU?

.....

MY BROTHER !!

"SOME-THING-SAN" OR OTHER_

DIDN'T YOU JUST CALL HIM BY HIS LAST NAME?

4

OUR ...

OUR PARENTS ARE DIVORCED, SO WE BOTH HAVE DIFFERENT NAMES.

AAAHHH. AHHHH.

AAAAAAAAAHHHHH!

TELL HIM, BRO.

RIGHT.

AAAHH
AAAHH

RUU-KUN!

DON'T GO SO FAR AHEAD ON YOUR OWN, IT'S DANGEROUS!

RENA-CHAN!

5

RUU-KUN CAME UP WITH A PLAUSIBLE LIE ABOUT BEING A PRIVATE TUTOR, AND GRACEFULLY PULLED OUR BACONS OUT OF THE FIRE.

NO, NOT QUITE.

YOU'RE THE SISTER?

THANK GOODNESS SHE KNEW WHAT SHE WAS DOING.

AND I GOT AWAY AS A MERE PASSERBY WHO GOT DRAGGED INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S BUSINESS...

WITH THAT HONEST LOOKING WOMAN SHOWING UP, THE COP'S ATTITUDE SOFTENED IMMEDIATELY.

シャク シャク

SO IT REALLY WAS RENA...

AND SHE GOT EVEN SMALLER THAN SHE ALREADY WAS.

grown up

SHE LOST MEAT IN QUITE A FEW PLACES.

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, SHE'S RENA.

BUT HER EYES LOOK FAR TOO INTELLIGENT TO BELONG ON SOMEONE OF HER APPARENT AGE.

7

BUT... THAT MEANS...

PROGRESSIVE AGING REGRESSION SYNDROME---

THE KIND THAT MAKES YOU AGE BACKWARDS.

SO I GUESS THAT DISEASE OF HERS ACTUALLY EXISTED AFTER ALL.

ACS. ANTI COUNTER SPIRAL ENZYME.

THAT WHATEVER-ENZYME I HAD DIDN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR CONDITION?

THE DOCTOR WAS JUST AS SURPRISED.

WHEN I GOT BACK TO THE HOSPITAL AFTER THAT, I HAD AN EXAMINATION RIGHT AWAY.

IT WORKED WONDERS.

I CAN GET MY 19-YEAR-OLD'S BODY BACK!

SO, THAT MEANS I CAN GO BACK TO NORMAL, RIGHT?!

YOUR CS ENZYMES ARE GOING COMPLETELY INACTIVE...

I AM SURP-RISED.

YOUR BODY'S BECOMING AROUND 4 YEARS YOUNGER HAD TO DO WITH THE "FOREIGN SUBSTANCE" THAT IS CS.

UH?

SO I WON'T GET BACK TO NORMAL RIGHT AWAY...

IF THE CS ENZYMES REMAIN INACTIVE AS THEY ARE NOW, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO GROW BACK AT THE NORMAL SPEED.

THAT'S RIGHT.

YOU'LL NEED JUST AS MUCH TIME AS IF YOU WERE GROWING NORMALLY.

EVEN IF YOU STOP THAT SUBSTANCE'S ACTIVITY, RECOVERING 4 YEARS' WORTH OF GROWTH WILL STILL TAKE 4 YEARS.

UUUH?!

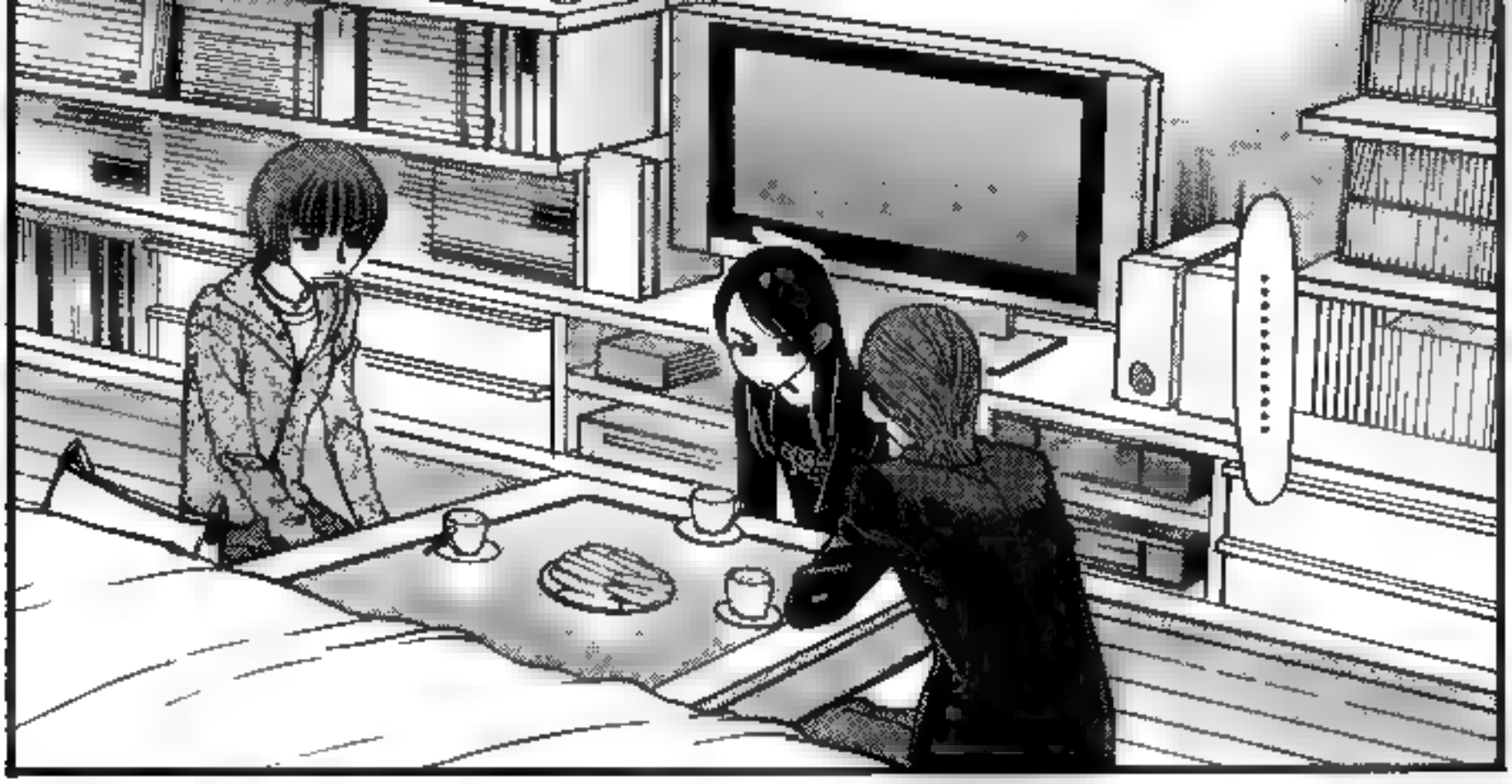
IT WOULD SEEM THE ACS' EFFECT IS ONLY TEMPORARY.

BUT SHORTLY AFTER THAT, MY APPETITE WENT TOTALLY OUT OF WHACK AGAIN...

SFX: STOMACH NOISES.

!!

THE CS ENZYMES ARE ACTIVATING AGAIN.



AND THEN ...
..YOU ENDED UP LIKE THIS...

10

BUT I NEVER ASKED FOR YOUR PHONE NUMBER...
I WANTED TO...
..AND THEY'VE BEEN WATCHING ME AT THE HOSPITAL, TO MAKE SURE I DIDN'T ESCAPE AGAIN...

IDIOT!
WHY DIDN'T YOU CONTACT ME IMMEDIATELY, THEN?!

NO... NO WAY. MY PERSONAL INFO.?

AS IN... USURPING YOUR PHYSICAL EXAMINATION DATA FROM THE COMPANY_

...WERE VERY MUCH ILLEGAL, AT ANY RATE. OR SO IT WOULD SEEM.

THE METHODS THE HOSPITAL USED TO FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR HAVING THE ACS ENZYME...

.....

ON TOP OF THAT RENA-CHAN DIDN'T EXACTLY ASK FOR PERMISSION WHEN SHE LOOKED AT THOSE...

11

YOU DIDN'T GET BACK HOME EVEN ONCE OVER THE LAST WEEK...

THING IS, ...

AGAWA-SAN...

ANYWAY, SHE EVENTUALLY MANAGED TO ESCAPE THE HOSPITAL, AND SHE'S BEEN HIDING AT MY PLACE EVER SINCE.

THAT'S HOW I GOT TO FIND YOU, BUT...

WE TRIED HAVING A LOOK AROUND AT YOUR OFFICE, EVENTUALLY...

I... I WAS...

WHERE THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN THE WHOLE TIME?!!

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH..!

I...

I TURNED. AGAIN.

AS A RESULT, I...

SORRY

14

_YOU LIED

YOU WERE ABLE TO GET ONE...

A GIRL FRIEND.

5

...IF YOU TOLD HER YOU LOVED HER FIRST.

I'M WONDERING...

MY GIRLFRIEND DUMPED ME WHEN I WAS 16, AND I'VE BEEN A COWARD EVER SINCE.

EVER SINCE THAT HAPPENED, I'D FORGOTTEN HOW TO LOVE.

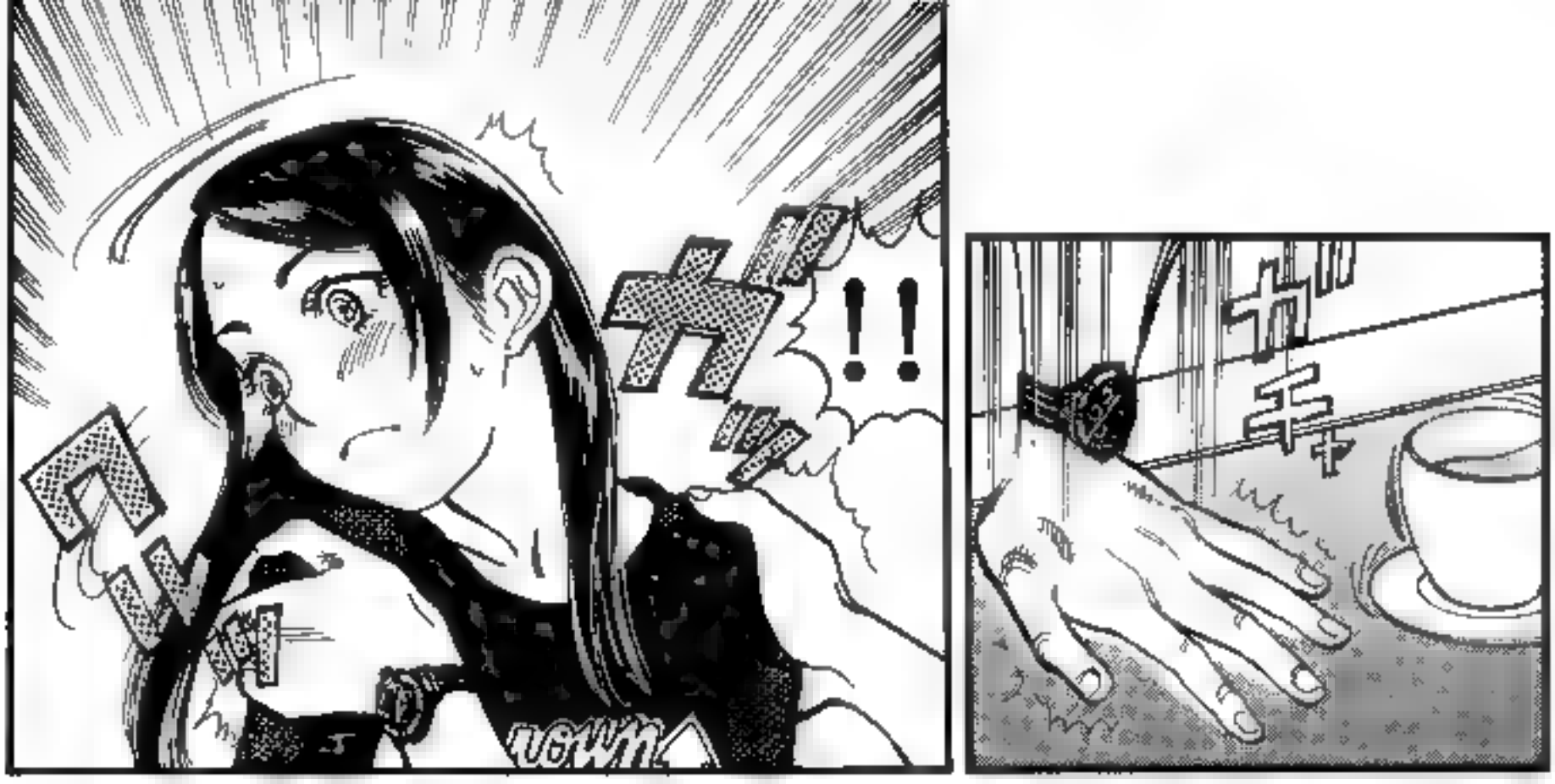
GOOD GOING.

THAT'S NEAT.

I TOLD HER FIRST

YEAH

I'LL TURN INTO AN EVEN SMALLER CHILD.
_WHAT HAPPENS THEN?
IF YOUR CONDITION PERSISTS_
AND PROB-ABLY
BEFORE LONG, I'LL BE A BABY AGAIN_



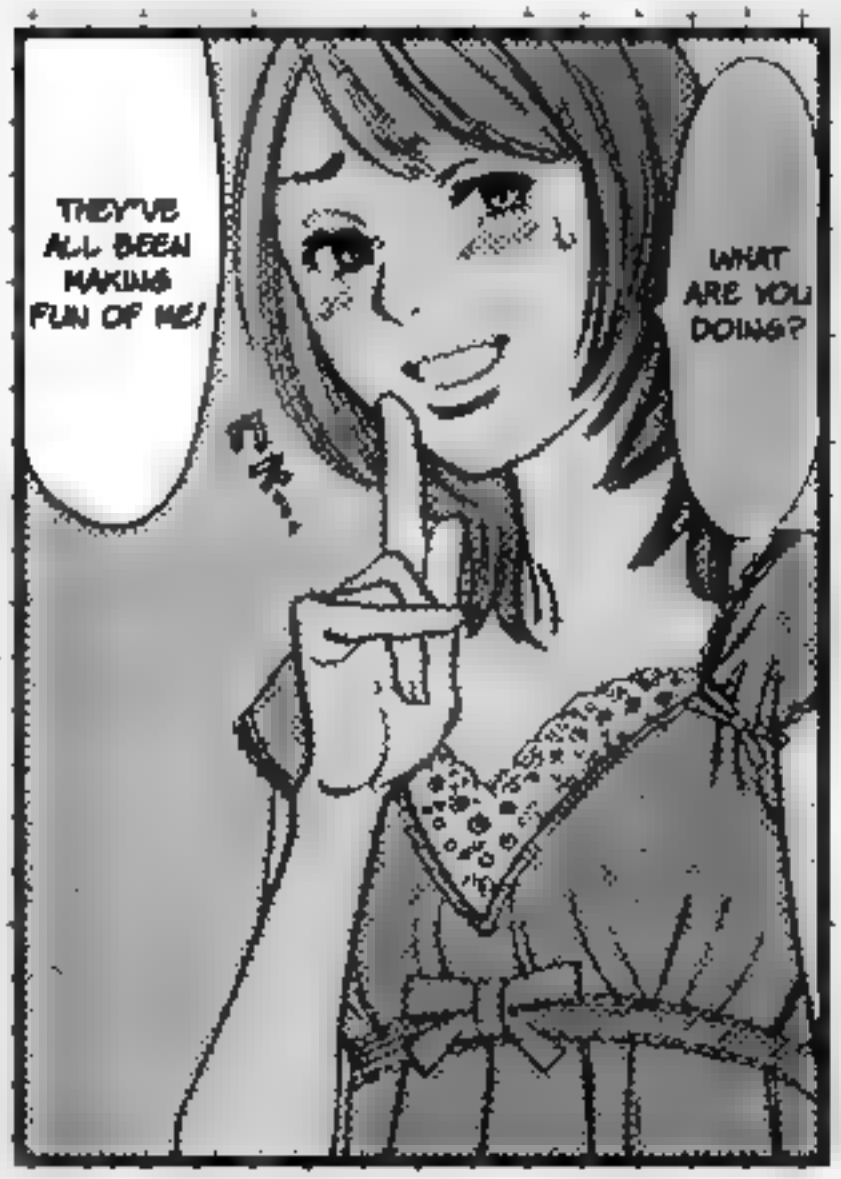
SAKURANBO SYNDROME. VOL.02 - END.

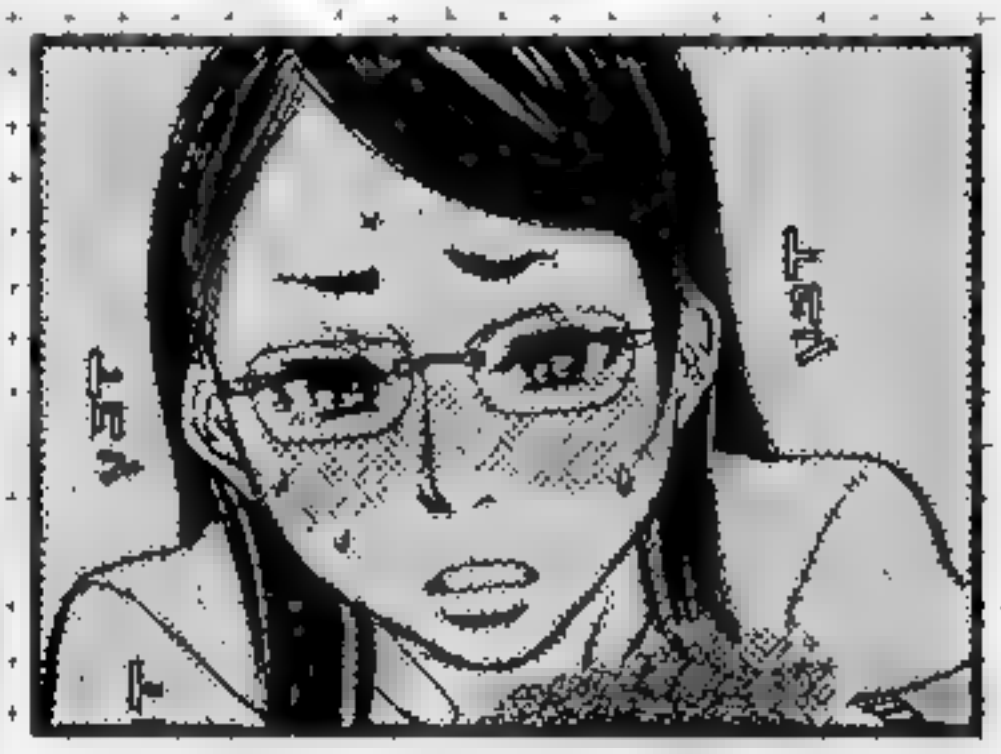
THE OTHER SIDE OF CUPID

キューピドの裏側（うらがわ）

Making of "Cupid II"

AN INSIDER'S VIEW OF THE SERIES' PRODUCTION,
DELIVERED BY THE AUTHOR, AND A BIT OF A MIXED BAG.
PLEASE COME ALONG.





[The Mysterious Girls] Chapter 9.
The couple of girls who appear in Rena's memories (?). No explanation given about them, so there's not sorting this out... But we'll get to know who they are later, so just wait for for it... You get the idea.
I'm wondering if they're gonna show up in the 3rd volume? (lol)

[Mucchan] Chapter 10.
One glance is enough to work out that Asou-san and Rena's names resemble Asami and Reiko's names from my previous work, "Nujidama". And Agawa himself is "Mucchan".
Nothing as fancy as a parallel world, here. This is merely the work of a capricious (playful) author, keeping the same names with just that little change that might make all the difference.

[Kago-chan's Three Coworkers] Chapter 12.
I tried to come up with three girls without thinking too hard about it, and I ended up imparting the same designs as in something I wrote earlier, Idol Detective. Don't ask me how... (lol).
I made up their names along those lines: Akira, Rina, and Kanako. Is that good enough?
By the way, the one with a different uniform (Rina) is not intended as a Lèvres Cosmetics Marketing staff member.
[In: The small round black dot is advertisement for Detective Idol vol.18, one of the author's other works.]

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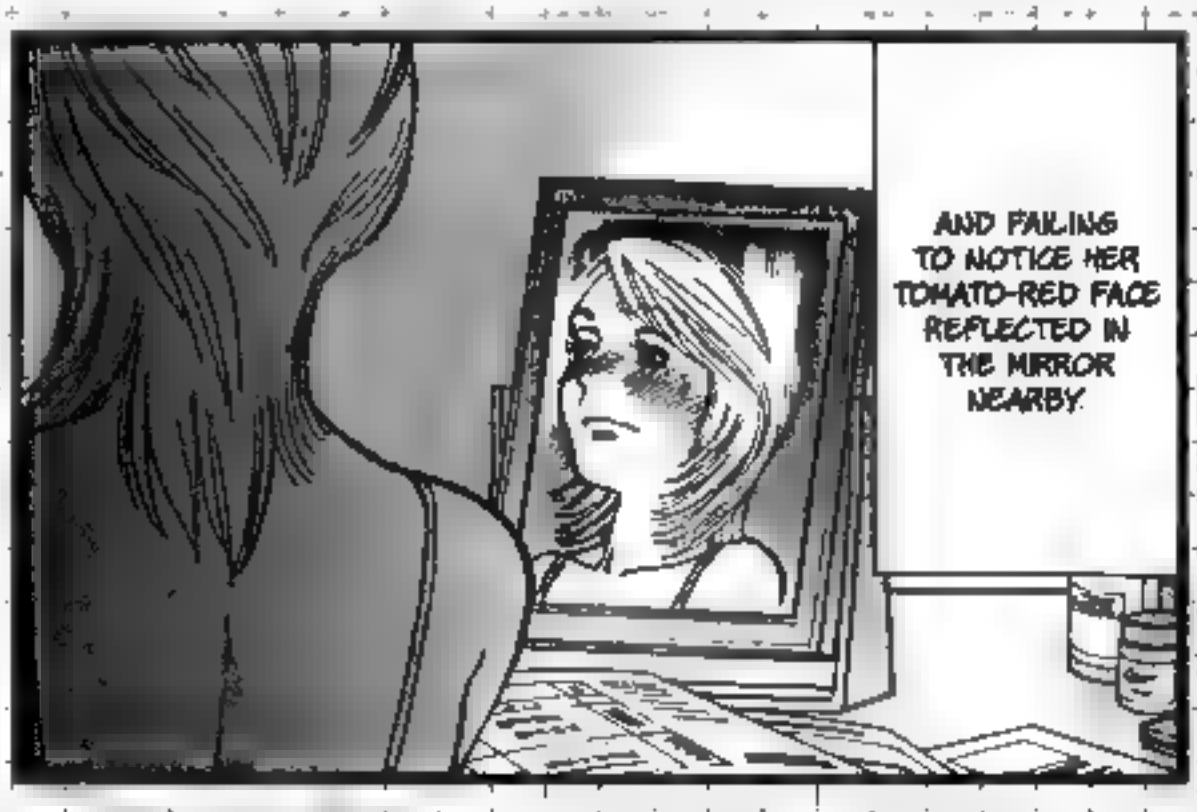
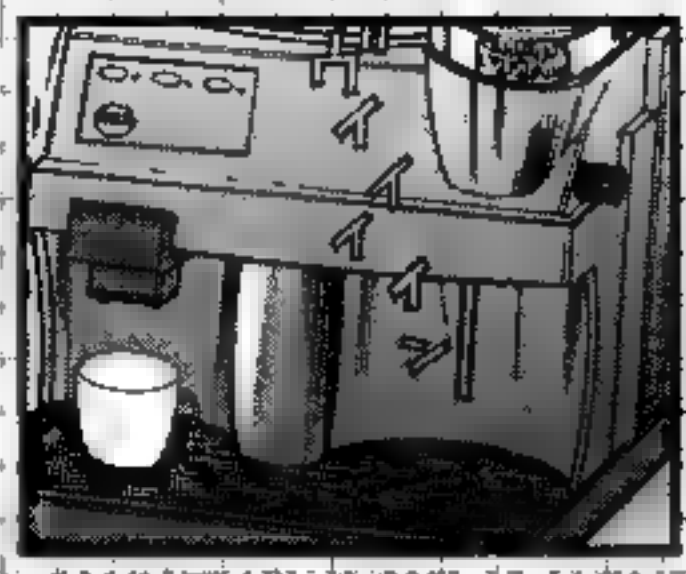


[TSUNDERE] CHAPTER 15.
THE WORD TSUNDERE IS FAIRLY IN VOGUE WITH THE PUBLIC, APPARENTLY.
EVER SINCE THE TERM WAS FIRST COINED, THE AUTHOR'S BEEN IN LOVE WITH IT. (LOL)

[HOW TO EAT SUSHI] CHAPTER 17.
I WANTED TO ADD SOME MEASURE OF VARIETY FROM THE PICTURES OF ASOU-SAN NEXT TO AGAWA-KUN, SO I SETTLED FOR DRAWING HER EATING SUSHI WITH CHOPSTICKS. THIS IS RELATIVELY WIDESPREAD AMONG FEMALES (ACCORDING TO THE SUPERVISOR'S LITTLE INFORMATION-GATHERING IN THE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT). THE AUTHOR HIMSELF IS OF A "NON-ROLLED SUSHI ARE PICKED BY HAND, ROLLED SUSHI ARE HANDLED WITH CHOPSTICKS" PERSUASION. GO FIGURE.

[ESPRESSO MACHINE] CHAPTER 14.
THE EASY WAY TO HAVE AN HONEST TO GOODNESS ESPRESSO COFFEE AT HOME! MANUFACTURED IN ITALY ITSELF, IT COSTS SOMETHING AROUND ¥150,000!!
...HOW MUCH OF AN ESPRESSO LOVER DOES THAT MAKE ASOU-SAN?!!
BUT AGAWA-KUN AND ASOU-SAN HAVE BOTH BEEN DRINKING COFFEE ALL THE WAY, FROM THE VERY BEGINNING.
IN THIS AS WELL, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THEIR TASTES ARE SIMILAR.
THEY DON'T DRINK THE SAME ALCOHOLS AT THE RESTAURANT, THOUGH.



[THE INITIAL FIRST CHAPTER/CHAPTER 16.
"THE PROTAGONIST LIVES WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND, WHEN A MYSTERIOUS GIRL APPEARS BEFORE HIM AND ASKS HIM TO KISS HER." IN OTHER WORDS, THIS CHAPTER WAS ACTUALLY MEANT TO BE THE FIRST ONE BEFORE THE PUBLICATION OF THE STORY STARTED. RATHER THAN THE MAIN CHARACTER HAVING A GIRL FROM THE GET-GO, I WANTED TO SHOW HIM FINDING ONE SO VERY BADLY WE ENDED UP WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION INSTEAD.

Making of "Cupid". To be continued.

麻生「来ちゃった…！」

クローゼットの中のれなのおなか

ぐるぐるぐる

どうなるの？

あなたならどうする？

残りフ発、究極の

カウントダウンに

悪魔の心臓

虹玉（にじだま）

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Cupid

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北崎

ニッポンの深夜を

さくらんぼシンドローム クピドの悪戯(いたずら)Ⅱ 2

ヤングサンデーコミックス

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